

The Inquirer.

A Religious, Political, and Literary Newspaper, and Record of Reberent Free Thought.

ESTABLISHED IN 1842.]

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[ONE PENNY.

The Inquirer.

ESTABLISHED 1842.

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TOPICS AND EVENTS.

THE CRETAN PROBLEM.

THE weeks slowly roll by, and men's hearts are taking courage from the absence of any striking disaster. It is evident that much negotiating is on foot among the Powers, and, though we cannot put much trust in the numerous rumours that fly about respecting the attitude of this ruler and that, we can but conclude that somewhere there is an influence at work staving off the collisions that but a short time ago seemed inevitable. We shall be glad if it proves that our Government has taken its cue from popular feeling, and that, knowing itself to be strong in the Mediterranean, if not on the Bosphorus, it has shown a will of its own in the matter of the threatened coercion of Greece. The time that has been gained has proved to demonstration that any other solution of the problem than placing the Government of Crete under the Greek forces is either too costly, too cumbrous, or too risky, while the Turkish forces become daily more odious even to the Powers that wish to save the 'integrity of the Turkish Empire.' To add to the failure of the Turks in Crete there comes this week news of

another massacre of Armenians, and Sir Philip Currie is said to have addressed,—another account says all the Ambassadors have addressed—a stronger remonstrance to the Sultan than has ever been given him before. He will probably show himself more impervious than ever to appeals of the kind. The chief danger in the present situation lies in the opposition of the Greek and Turkish forces at the frontier. If these can be kept from blows the Powers may get to some agreement as to the government of Crete.

WHY NOT IN ENGLAND?

IN last week's *Hampstead and Highgate Express* Dr. Brooke Herford described the kind of fraternisation which takes place in the United States between different denominations, including Evangelicals and Unitarians. It is not merely that good people of every kind have found practical work to do in common, but that in religious services there has been and is occasional co-operation of the most encouraging kind. Why should it be so difficult to do in England what has been found practicable in America? Leaders like Phillips Brooks, Dr. Gordon, and Lyman Abbott have not only found co-operation with Unitarians possible, but helpful. We cannot believe so poorly of our Evangelical brethren that their fellowship now and again, and their utterance of their heart's deepest faith and emotion, would not prove a means of grace to us; nor do we think that they who are ready to do honour to such leaders as Dr. Martineau and Stopford Brooke would altogether fail to be stimulated by intercourse with the disciples and comrades of minds like these. We are informed that nearly four hundred local councils were represented at the recent Free Church Conference. Surely in some of these local societies the principle of extended co-operation might be permissible, even if the National Council preferred to adopt a general banner of Evangelicalism as best indicating the general spirit and purpose of the movement. It might be useful to send marked copies of the *Express* to influential persons in different localities. In reply to Dr. Herford's note that appeared in our columns a fortnight ago, information has come to hand of a number of places where what we have called 'extended co-operation' is actually going on, and we hope to hear of more. The spirit of union is something which cannot be forced and can only grow naturally. All we ask is that it shall at least have freedom to grow and be welcomed and not discouraged.

A SOUTH LONDON PROJECT.

ON another page we quote a circular which has been issued by the committee of the Blackfriars Mission to the subscribers, in which a scheme is mooted for the amal-

gamation of the mission with the church in Stamford-street. The great changes which have taken place in the locality have rendered it necessary to consider seriously the future of the church, and an opportunity is also presented in the affairs of the mission which renders the proposal at least a feasible one. A report of the meeting of subscribers to the mission will be found elsewhere, and we will only say here that if the scheme of amalgamation can be carried through, there ought to be a great work set on foot in this district of South London. Something analogous to the various 'settlements' existing in Walworth and Canning Town and elsewhere would seem to be sorely needed in Blackfriars; and London ought not to find it difficult to provide men and money for such a work among the poorer brethren.

MOTHERS IN ISRAEL.

TO-MORROW is 'Mothering Sunday.' Long may its sentiment endure, whatever becomes of its observance. It is quite true, said Joseph de Maistre, 'that women have produced no *chefs-d'œuvre*. They have written no "Iliad," nor "Jerusalem Delivered," nor "Hamlet"; they have designed no Church of St. Peter's, composed no "Messiah," carved no "Apollo Belvedere," painted no "Last Judgment"; they have invented neither algebra nor telescopes, nor steam engines; but they have done something far greater and better than all this, for it is at their knees that upright and virtuous men and women have been trained—the most excellent productions in the world.' It is absurd to compare man and woman to the disadvantage of either, and impossible to say which of them has had most influence in moulding the destinies of the race. Although it has been men who have taken the sword and fought the 'decisive battles of the world,' it has commonly been the women who have inspired their sons and husbands for the fight; and it rests much with women now to hasten the end of war by inspiring their sons with a horror of it. But while the sword is used, and the safety of nations seems to depend on their military strength, the great soldier will be a powerful person in the state. In Israel, in David's earlier years, General Joab was almost as powerful as the king. Two other great soldiers of the time were Abishai and Asahel; and these three men were brothers; they were 'sons of Zeruiah,' and their father is never mentioned. Probably the father had never distinguished himself by courage or patriotism, or the careful training of his sons, and it was well known that they owed more to their mother. Zeruiah was a woman, who could not go to the wars herself, and perhaps she had no voice nor vote in assemblies of the people. But with these three sons she may well be satisfied; for

when their names are mentioned in history, it shall be said that they were the 'sons of Zeruiah.' The mothers of families are not obliged to train their sons for the battlefield. They can direct their minds to very different ideals if they please. It is in their power to give the world peace or war, industry or idleness, purity or vice, superstition or the spirit of truth-seeking; and to change the face of society and the destinies of mankind according as they train their sons.

NOMINATIONS TO THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.

So much is done admirably in the multifarious business connected with the National Conference that it seems ungracious to find fault; but the complaint of a ministerial correspondent this week is so reasonable that we cannot exclude it. He tells us that he received on Wednesday a communication relating to the election of the new Committee, together with a form of nomination for that election. The Conference's rule applying to the subject is quoted in the communication, and this states that 'every congregation and society which is invited to send delegates to any Conference shall also be invited to nominate some one person . . . to serve on the Committee.' (The rule also states that the expiring Committee may also nominate not more than six persons for election to the new Committee.) The form of nomination received does not, however, indicate that the nomination is to be by a congregation or society, but would appear, in the absence of the extract from the rules, to place the power of nomination in the hands of the person addressed. That this is what is meant would also be inferred from the fact that the form is to be returned by Monday next, an impossible date if a congregational meeting is to be convened to decide upon a nomination, most congregations insisting upon at least seven days' notice of a meeting. We find, however, upon inquiry, that the nominations must be made only by the congregation or society. We hope that this very short notice will not result in any serious difficulty.

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE week's Obituary includes the names of Mr. Isaac Sharp, Quaker missionary; Monsignor Petre; Dr. Robert Hogg, horticulturalist; Miss Wrigley, donor of art collection to Bury; Mr. R. Martin, banker and statistician; Captain Houston, shipowner; Miss Emily Shireff, educationalist.

PROFESSOR JAMES, a professor of psychology at Harvard University, and a brother of Mr. Henry James, the well-known novelist, has written a volume of essays in popular philosophy which will shortly be published over here. The book takes its title from the initial essay, 'The Will to Believe.'

WE refuse to be disheartened over the burking of the Arbitration Treaty in the American Senate. It is a set-back, but not a reversal of the tide. So great a gain is not to be made easily; it will be all the more stable when it is made. Meanwhile, sensible citizens on both sides of the Atlantic will refrain from bitter words about those who have stopped progress awhile. John Bright's plan with interrupters at a political meeting was rather to ask them to stay and be converted than to let them be hustled out. It's dogged that does it, and good sense will win the day at last.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN & Co. will shortly publish a volume on 'The Christian Ecclesia,' consisting of a course of lectures and four sermons by the late Prof. Hort. The lectures contain, says the *Athenæum*, a careful survey of the evidence to be derived from the literature of the apostolic age for the solution of a fundamental problem. The title 'Ecclesia' was chosen expressly for its freedom from the distracting associations which have gathered round its more familiar synonyms, and is in itself sufficient indication of the spirit of genuine historical inquiry in which the study was undertaken. The sermons, to some extent, supply the gap in the original scheme, which the writer did not live to complete, dealing from different points of view with the early conceptions of the Ecclesia.

THE Education, or rather the Church Endowment, Bill will, no doubt, have passed through the House of Commons by the end of this week, and one of the grossest legislative scandals of our time will have been perpetrated. To take away its sting, we are told that Mr. Balfour will, probably before Easter, bring in a Bill for the relief of necessitous Board Schools. But no after thought of the kind can do away with the fact that the Bill, without amendment, just forced through the House is confessedly faulty in construction and designedly hazy. Sir John Gorst has said in the country, that the new 'associations' are to 'grow up naturally'; hence the Government would not dictate their form and powers. Sir John used to be respected; but his silence during the passage of this Bill has been one of the most deplorable incidents in political life of late, and his reputation has received a deadly blow.

WE have received a communication from Mr. Walter McLaren, M.P., on behalf of the British, Continental, and General Federation for the Abolition of the State Regulation of Vice (1, King-street, Westminster). It urges the necessity of prompt action at the present moment to convince the House of Commons and the Government that the people of this country would view with abhorrence the attempt to revive in India the system against which this action of the Federation is directed. The readers of the daily newspapers must be, unhappily, only too well aware of the course of recent events in connection with the subject. We cannot enter into details here; we can only express our shame and loathing not only at the horrible results of our military establishments, results which have been just published in the most repulsive form, but also at the degrading tone adopted by those who are in authority. It is not going too far to say that they have encouraged the vice, the results of which they deplore.

OUR enterprising friends the editors of *Light on the Way* have produced an excellent 'Conference number' for April. Almost the whole space is devoted to pictures and portraits connected with the Conference's meetings and organisation, with a running commentary stating who's who and what's what. Appropriately a portrait of Mr. Herbert Bramley, Town Clerk of Sheffield and Chairman and Treasurer of the Reception Committee of the Conference. The other portraits are those of Mr. Charles Fenton, acting secretary of the Conference; Rev. J. E. Manning and Mrs. Manning, of Upper Chapel, Mr. Michael Hunter, J.P., Rev. J. Ellis, Mr. Benjamin Greaves, Mr.

George H. Hunt, and Mr. W. R. Stevenson, all connected with Sheffield and the Reception committee; and the following who will take part in the proceedings,—Revs. Stopford Brooke, Dr. Herford, C. H. Wellbeloved, J. Wood, W. E. Addis, Dr. Drummond, Prof. Carpenter, Prof. J. E. Odgers, C. J. Street, R. J. Jones; and Messrs. J. R. Beard, Harry Rawson, J. Cogan Conway, Jesse Hind, and Grosvenor Talbot. Several of the principal buildings of the town are also represented. On the whole the number is a capital one, and both those who go to Sheffield and those who stay at home will find in it a welcome addition to the interest of the Conference.

THOMAS PARGETER'S (OF FOXCOTE) CHARITY.—The trustees of this charity held their thirtieth annual meeting on Monday the 22 inst., at the offices of Messrs. Harding & Son, 32, Waterloo street, Birmingham. The trustees present were:—The Revs. H. Eachus, E. D. Priestley Evans, E. P. Hall, H. A. McKeen, J. Hardinge Matthews, A. H. Shelley, A. W. Timmis, and Joseph Wood. The Rev. A. W. Timmis was elected chairman for the ensuing year, Lloyds Bankham, Birmingham (Temple Row Branch) Bankers, and Mr. Alexander Fyske, treasurer. Mr. Charles Harding was re-elected secretary, and the Rev. L. P. Jacks and E. P. Hall were appointed auditors. The trustees are pleased to record that since the last annual meeting they have received through the Rev. C. H. Wellbeloved, as executor of the will of the late Mrs. Elizabeth Read a cheque for £1000, and which with an annual subscription of £100 contributed annually by a friend of this charity will enable the trustees materially to increase the number of annuitants. The number at present in receipt of annuities from the charity is 101, of whom ninety-two are granted £20 a year each, whilst the remainder being sisters receive £16 a year each. Owing to the increase of funds above referred to the trustees at their recent meeting were able to appoint five additional annuitants, which will raise the total number to 106, being the largest number at any one time on the books of the charity. The applications for the benefits of this charity are exceedingly numerous and very largely in excess of the vacancies.

SLY'S IMPROVED PATENT TRUSS.—(44 prize medals, diplomas, and royal appointments awarded.) Experience shows that the old-fashioned steel-spring trusses necessarily press upon and often disease parts of the body before wear in a perfectly healthy condition. To those suffering from rupture any invention that gives positive relief is a real blessing. The following valuable testimonials prove the worth of our 'Special Patent Truss.' Sir B. Ward Richardson, the eminent physician, writing to the 'Medical Guardian,' says:—'Sly's truss is one which I should advise patients to try. It is one that is more comfortable to wear, always adapts itself to the every movement of the body, and can be worn with every degree of comfort. It will in all cases be found effectual.' In the following the names are not given for obvious reasons—the originals can be seen on application:—'After wearing your truss for six months the hernia failed to appear on standing up without the Truss, even coughed.—M.D.' 'Your Truss is more curative than any I know.—M.D.' 'Truss answers admirably; is a great improvement on the old patterns.—M.R.C.S.' 'I must congratulate you on your success; your specialite alone will be recommended by me.—M.D.' It was worn and recommended by Sir Andrew Clark (late president of the Royal College of Physicians), and is simple, rapid, and effective. 44 prize medals, diplomas, and royal appointments awarded. Particulars and prices of Sly Bros., Oxford.

LITERATURE.

FIVE GREAT SKEPTICAL DRAMAS OF HISTORY.*

THE INQUIRER and all earnest seekers after truth should be deeply interested in this canon of skeptical scriptures as compiled and reviewed by so ardent a lover of skeptical free thought as the late Rev. John Owen. Readers will remember Mr. Owen as the broad-minded churchman who gave an address to the students at Manchester College some few years ago. Both from his address then and from the book before us, no less than from his previous works on 'Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance' and 'Skeptics of the French Renaissance,' we should gather that our author's sympathies were always more with the skeptic than the dogmatist; and, despite his position in a dogmatic church and his personal appreciation of the practical value of dogma and the demand for it in the popular mind, it is clear that the sphere of skeptical free thought was ever the most congenial to his own mind. Indeed, the skeptical foundation of dogma, like the fire beneath the volcanic ash, leaves skepticism the fire of religious thought, whose scorching heartburn the churches would prevent by the cooling down of its surface into dogma, whereon the soul that does not break through its thin traditional crust may feel at rest on something solid: deluded in part by blind hopes, but no less lighted through life by the light of these hopes, and finding the semi-falsehood true enough to bear the weight of the burden of life. The created creed, like the created world, is a reality; and dogmas seem to spring from the void of skepticism as a kind of first step towards the order that is to be created out of the chaos; created in some sense, too, by the will of God, and progressing, perhaps, towards the survival of the fittest. And so we may understand how one and the same mind may be interested in the history of dogma and in the history of skepticism; and how the incumbent of a dogmatic church may be a lover of skeptical free thought; seeing that no man ever dogmatizes save on matters about which he is not sure, and in order to create, in practice, the certainty that cannot be found in argument. For, after copying down the crude experiences and investigating the facts of life, so far as they can be known, there comes the problem as to the facts that are not known, and the shape of the arc where it dips out of sight; and here thought becomes truly free, and is left to its own free thinking, to think out a theory that will meet all the requirements of the case, and so harmonise the contradictions as to show how all may have come to exist side by side in the same universe. The true truthseeker seeks the whole truth as well as the fragments of it, and free thinking, if it think freely enough and far enough, must think out towards an answer as well as a problem.

The skeptical thought with which Mr. Owen deals in this book opens with the *Prometheus Vinculus* of Æschylus, concerning which we cannot do better than quote his own words on page 103:—

For the first time in Greek thought we have expressed in a form equally distinct and picturesque the relation of metaphysical and spiritual ideas to their physical origin. The *Prometheus Vinculus* is a drama based upon a

theory of evolution. It represents the growth of mankind, from their primary recognition of physical facts and their own needs in relation to them to the highest spiritual and moral truths. By its very structure it denotes the progress of men in analogical reasoning. It has, therefore, a special significance for a period like the present, when evolution is the accepted mode for all phenomena, whether physical or metaphysical. Possessing all these varied implications, we are prepared to understand the marvellous fascination which the Prometheus myth has exercised on the noblest intellects that have adorned the history of humanity. It appeals directly to all that is heroic, magnanimous and disinterested in man's highest nature. Whenever human giants have been crushed by some overmastering and unscrupulous tyranny, and have demanded some principle of resistance to it; whenever leaders of men have had to contend with neglect, with solitude, and friendlessness, with abuse and persecution, then the image of the suffering Titan, and his indomitable spirit, have exercised a most potent sway. Whatever may have been the nature and extent of that worship, which some writers suppose to have been offered at his shrine in the Academy at Athens, the character of Prometheus has undoubtedly been enshrined in many a human heart, and has obtained from congenial spirits a full measure of fealty and reverence. With the single exception of Jesus, no example of suffering goodness has taken such profound hold on the imaginations and affections of humanity.

All this is true, and the delineation of Prometheus and his endless resistance to the tyranny of Zeus strikes the key note to the whole tenor of Mr. Owen's remarkable series of essays, and it is for this reason that we have quoted him here at such great length.

And yet it is just here, as it seems to us, that the bias of our author appears, and his tendency to exalt his skeptics at the cost of somewhat over-estimating the brutality of their opponents. Granted that Zeus oppresses Prometheus by sheer brute force, one cannot help asking the question, What else could the poor brute do, being, after all, only a blind brute, and lacking that wonderful insight, and especially that goodness, which Prometheus himself possesses? When force, fire, and strength appear on the stage, and in their midst the foresight of them, one expects that Foresight will be forearmed and take the necessary steps to protect himself. The fire is slow and very unwilling to hurt him; but as Foresight takes no measure of precaution, the fire very unwillingly does him a grievous damage. Then at last Foresight howls.

So the play begins; and so, also, in the middle of the play, the force of brute passion, acting on the poor woman Io, drives her to seek advice of Foresight. Foresight simply foresees, and, without advising any active resistance, foretells the horrible future that is inevitably to follow on her passionate life, makes her case worse instead of better, and sends her off in a greater frenzy of terror than when she came.

Again, at the end of the play, the messenger of Zeus urges that no evil comes upon any without ample warning in time to escape: and all through the play Foresight is urged to be wise in time, and protect himself. He says only that such action on his part would be superfluous trouble, and remains as he is. The calamity follows, as everybody had said it would, and Foresight is caught in it, and the play ends with his appeal to the onlookers—

Behold how unjustly I suffer! Now to us it seems that there is distinctly a problem in the play: Did Prometheus suffer unjustly or not?

There is justice on the side of Zeus, who at all times gives fair warning to Fore-

sight of everything that his brute forces are going to do. But all sympathy is with Prometheus, for though a man foresees an evil and does not avoid it, we cannot fail to be sorry for him when the inevitable calamity has come. The question arises, Why did Foresight refuse to take the obvious and clear warning? Because to take action simply to avoid misery was to acknowledge that brute threat was master of the situation. This the God of Intelligence will not do.

Prometheus, therefore, so far from typifying human wisdom, represents the very reverse. Among men it is considered that the highest wisdom consists in avoiding the dangers that foresight gives them warning of; and men, therefore, are greatly benefited by foresight. But foresight in the abstract, foresight far removed from the habitations of men, does nothing but foresee.

To us, then, it seems that there is in this play a certain skepticism as to divine and human wisdom; and the Greek mind, with its worship of wisdom, has met here with a Greek skeptic, who raises the question, Is not foresight by itself powerless? and also, of human wisdom, Is it not ignoble, consisting in nothing else than obedience to whatever brute force happens for the moment to be in power?

The inactivity of Prometheus, and his obstinate refusal to help himself, is worthy of note in connection with his ultimate release through the activity of a Hercules. Clearly Foresight needs strong action, and brute force needs the guidance of Foresight, and, as the play intimates, Zeus and Prometheus need each other, and must some day come to terms.

We would urge that in Æschylus's drama the root thought is, not so much the brutality of Zeus, nor the sublime defiance of Prometheus, but, rather, a certain distress that the forces of the universe and the intelligence of the universe should persist in quarrelling with each other, each waiting for the other to make the first overtures of friendship; and we would still adhere to our opinion that the play of Æschylus is not quite so one-sided as one is led to imagine on hearing the case stated from Prometheus's point of view alone.

The careful examination of the good and bad effects of foresight, especially the contrast between its active benefits among men and its uselessness to itself, and in and for itself, is very remarkable. Foresight, if it be inactive, increases the world's misery; and Foresight, when it has been inactive, causes that bitter remorse, the knowledge that we might have avoided an evil but did not, which like an eagle gnaws at the liver of him who foresaw but did not forewarn.

Passing from the *Prometheus Vinculus* of Æschylus to the book of *Job*, we have the problem of skepticism presented in reference to the Jewish conceptions of divine justice, though in so broad and universal a spirit as to have rendered this book applicable to every age and time.

In Goethe's *Faust* we reach what would seem to be the author's favourite work, and largely so from the exceedingly complex character of its hero, leading the mind to view the problem of life and the search for knowledge from almost every conceivable point of view. While the complexity of the problem in *Faust*, exalts that drama above all others as the highest pinnacle that the human mind has yet reached in its expansive self-development in all directions, to the minds of those whose thought can

* 'The Five Great Skeptical Dramas of History.' By the late John Owen. Swan Sonnenschein & Co. 10s 6d.

easily grasp so many threads in one, yet it must ever seem to most men too complex to be vivid. One seems to be ever running after stray straws in all directions at once, and one feels the delusive sense of having run a very long way, and having, therefore, attained a very great deal; but on reflection there is some doubt whether, among all these myriad straws, one really caught firm hold of any one of them, to carry it off as a permanent trophy and an undying and untarnished joy.

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Calderon's *El Magico Prodigioso*, the skepticism begins to thin. Indeed, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* requires some little explanation of its appearance in this connection, the skepticism in this case has reference to hesitation in action, or skepticism of will rather than of thought pure and simple; while the *El Magico Prodigioso*, with which the book concludes, is admittedly inferior to the rest, though showing skepticism in direct conflict with the worst form of dogmatism. Most interesting is Mr. Owen's exposition of the skepticism of these plays in reference to the orthodoxy of the times and peoples among whom they appeared, whilst exhibiting under their various disguises an essential agreement of thought and purpose. We quote from the preface:—

Prometheus in opposition to the Olympian deities; the patriarch Job in antagonism to the Hebrew Jahve; Faust and the wonder-working magician contending with the Deity of the modern world, and with the laws by which he endeavours to rule it—all are vindicators of the self-same issue—protagonists in the self-same battle. They occupy the same standpoint of inherent justice, and of automatic mental independence, of self-determining reason and conscience; they commence from the same starting-point; they employ largely the same arguments; they arrive mostly at the same conclusions. In a word, the contest is the same—humanity set in array against the dread powers of the universe—which has engaged the attention of the noblest minds whose speculations are recorded in human history; a contest contemporaneous with the growth of reason, instinct with its life and attributes, and bound to endure as long as reason and humanity are destined to last—in other words, to the eternity of man and whatever is eternal and divine in his speculation and aspiration.

The book is rendered the more deeply interesting by its careful history and review of the myths underlying the several dramas, revealing a kind of evolution of the myth from the most crude superstition into its moral, intellectual presentation in the drama. That life itself should be such a tragedy may explain the simplicity and ease with which the deepest skeptical thought is able to present itself in such a vivid dramatic form; and we would earnestly commend Mr. Owen's essays on these five dramas to all who are interested in the great problem of Human Life—its tragedy. W. H.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

[TO PUBLISHERS.—All Books, etc., sent to THE INQUIRER will be acknowledged under this head, with name of publisher and price, if supplied. The necessities of our space, however, compel us to limit the number selected for critical notice and review.]

The Spirit on the Waters. By E. A. Abbott. (Macmillan).

Westminster Abbey. By The Very Rev. Dean Farrar. 1s. (Isbister).

York Minster. By The Very Rev. Dean Pusey-Cust. 1s. (Isbister).

Winchester Cathedral. By the Rev. Canon Benham. 1s. (Isbister).

St. Alban's Abbey. By Rev. Canon Liddell. 1s. (Isbister).

AN EARLY CENSUS OF UNITARIAN CONGREGATIONS AND WORSHIPPERS. II.

As promised in our last article, we give a list of places included in the Census of 1830-32 where Unitarian worship then seems to have been held, but which are now numbered amongst the 'things which have been and are not to-day.' Again let it be borne in mind that the figures are said to show the average number of hearers:—

CORNWALL.—Falmouth, late M. Harding, 20; Flushing, do., 40.

DERBYSHIRE.—'No returns received from Norton, Ilkeston, Duffield, Lea, Ripley, Ashford, Stony Middleton.'

DEVONSHIRE.—Honiton, Jas. Taplin, 100; 'No returns from Lypstons.'

DORSETSHIRE.—Dorchester, L. Lewis, morning 100, afternoon 150, evening 130.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—'No returns from Marshfield.'

HERTFORDSHIRE.—St. Albans, Wm. Marshall, morning 30, afternoon 60—70.

KENT.—Benenden, Buckland, 30; Headcorn, 'Chincock ill, supplied by C. Saint,' 70; Sturry, 'Preaching once a fortnight, well attended.' 'No returns from Rolvenden, Biddenden, Sundridge, Smarden.'

LANCASHIRE.—Bolton, Moor Lane, vacant, 200; Ormskirk, Hy. Fogg, 45; Prescott, G. W. Elliott, 70—80; Risley, Joseph Marriott, 20.

LEICESTERSHIRE.—Mount Sorrell, T. C. Holland, no return.

LINCOLNSHIRE.—Coningsby, 'Preaching station,' R. Wright, 20 regular hearers; Sutton, vacant, 30.

MIDDLESEX.—Brentford, John Geary, 50. LONDON AND ENVIRONS.—Trinity-place, Southwark, J. C. Means, 50; Burton-crescent, B. Mardon, 120; Jewin-street, D. Davison, 300; Worship-street, B. Mardon, 80.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.—New Radford, 'Methodist Unitarians, supplied occasionally in the evening by the Rev. B. Carpenter, but principally by Mr. Jonathan Holmes, a lay minister, and latterly by Edward Hawksley,' 20—30; 'a Sunday-school for boys and girls, 100—120.'

NORTHUMBERLAND.—Alnwick, vacant, morning 80—100, evening 200; North Shields, J. W. Lowrie, 'No return.' 'Occasional preaching at Denwick, Belford, Warkworth, and other places.'

SOMERSETSHIRE.—'No return from Oakhill.'

SUSSEX.—Cuckfield, 'Occasional 30'; Skaimes Hill, 'occasional 25.'

WARWICKSHIRE.—'No return from Kenilworth.'

WILTSHIRE.—'No returns from Warminster, Calne.'

WORCESTERSHIRE.—Bewdley, Evan Jones, morning 20—40; afternoon about 150.

YORKSHIRE.—Welburn, 'Regularly supplied by York College Missionary Society,' about 70; Sheffield, Music Hall, Peter Wright, 50; Stainforth, W. Duffield, 70; 'No returns from Jubbar Gate, York; Leeds, Cow Lane; Cawood.'

ISLAND OF GUERNSEY.—Guernsey, S. Weston, 30.

SCOTLAND.—'Paisley, Carlisle, Tillin-coultry, Kilmarnock, supplied by H. Clarke, missionary, who has also preached at Lanark, Johnstone, and other places.'

GEORGE EYRE EVANS.

'IAN MACLAREN' is, we understand, to be formally charged with heresy at the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England. And what will orthodoxy gain by that? Certainly Dr. Watson will not lose.

PROFESSOR BRUCE'S GIFFORD LECTURES.—VIII.

HISTORIC DAWNS.

IN his eighth lecture, given at Glasgow, Professor Bruce began the consideration of 'The Power working beneficently in humanity,' which would occupy two lectures—the first dealing with 'Historic Dawns,' and the second with 'Historic Days.' God must be viewed as a Power working beneficently in humanity and for humanity—working towards the ever-advancing humanisation of man through the development of the rational and moral possibilities of his nature. One often turned for traces of a providential order in history to the thorny pages of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman history; but they could not afford to leave out of sight those portions of the human race that had not had an eventful career. Large sections of mankind had occupied positions describable as pre-historic, sub-historic, post-historic. It was possible to take interest in these three unrenowned, unsung sections of the race, and to believe them not devoid of significances for divine Providence. Little could be known of a pre-historic condition, but it was sometimes possible to see a people just emerging out of the darkness of pre-historic night into the daylight of history; they could watch historic dawns, some of which were very fair and prognostic of a notable future, such as the ancient Vedic Indians, the Persians, the Hebrews, and, centuries later, the Arabs and the Germans. The Vedic Indians, 1500 years before Christ, were acquainted with the arts of agriculture and weaving, with the use of metals, in possession of a highly organised language, rich in the higher treasures of the spirit. The ancient Persians again had their religious poems, and possessed a passion for righteousness which forced on them, as an explanation of the existence of so much evil in the world, the crude theory of a good spirit, the creator of good, and an evil spirit, the creator of evil. Another dawn was that of the people of Israel, mirrored in the Old Testament. Then there were the Arabians, whose emergence took place in connection with the religious movement inaugurated by Mahomet. Mahomet's religion brought about a reformation among his countrymen, and conferred a real boon upon them, morally as well as otherwise. Mohammedanism might prepare the way in some parts of the world for something better than itself. Providence did not give the best at once, but gave what relatively good men could receive as a step towards the better, and the better as a step towards the best. This was done in the case of Israel—why not also in other cases? Mohammedanism could make no claim to finality, but must bow to the superiority of a worthily represented Christianity. Another historic dawn was that of the ancient Germans, who appeared above the horizon shortly after the beginning of the Christian era. These people, presented by Tacitus in a very attractive light, loved liberty and chose their kings for their nobility. They were self-restrained, romantic, lived together in towns, tilled the land apart, each in his own order. The relation between the sexes was chaste and pure; monogamy prevailed; adultery was rare and was vigorously punished. Vice was abhorred, not laughed at. How shallow was the notion that these barbarians were of no account in the moral order of the world. Manifestly a beneficent Providence had been preparing these people through silent centuries for historic service and renown. If

such a people never had their opportunity, one's faith in Providence might well be shaken, since it would signify an excellent instrument wasted. But the instrument was ready and the time for use had come, and in both the Providential order was apparent. Regarding those portions of the human race that seemed destined to abide permanently in the obscurity of the sub-historic condition, was there any likelihood of any of the dark races of Africa becoming an elect instrument in the hands of Providence for signal service to the higher interests of mankind on that continent? The presumption was in favour of the negative; yet the fact that the Germans and the Arabs had to wait so long for their opportunity ought to guard us against too confident dogmatising. Not opportunity merely had to be considered, but endowment also, and even climate. Extremes of heat and cold were not favourable to the development of intellectual and moral energy. Still, Africa was a vast continent, and it was far from impossible that some of the people occupying its healthiest and most bracing tracts of country might waken up to a new life under the stimulating influence of a new social environment. But Providence need not take the form of making all people renowned. Some were fitted to give and some to receive benefits; some to achieve results of which history would take note, and some to play the humbler part of participating in the good effects of these achievements; so that people in the latter position could not be said to be neglected by the Divine Father of mankind. As to those people now in the post-historic stage of their existence, we must by no means think of them as human refuse in which the moral order took no further interest. God did not despise them, nor did He cast away any elect people. There was an Israel, a Greece, and an Italy still; they were not what they had been, but who could tell what they yet might be? Meantime, they had a share in that goodness of God which is unto all, and in His tender mercies which are over all His works.

OUR Melbourne correspondent refers in another column to the *Australian Herald's* queries anent Wesleyan Methodism. We find that, in answer to a question as to the creed of Wesleyans, it is finally stated that 'every man "who desires . . . to be saved from sin," and evidences the same by a moral life, is qualified for membership in the Methodist Church quite irrespective of creed.' But next it is asked, 'Could a Unitarian Christian be a Wesleyan?' and the answer is, 'He would not feel himself at home in this communion, for, from the orthodox point of view, he is damned, and if his views were known, he would probably not be admitted.' The easy way in which being 'damned' and not being 'at home' are coupled is instructive.

THROAT IRRITATION AND COUGH.—Soreness and dryness, tickling and irritation, inducing cough and affecting the voice. For these symptoms use Epps's Glycerine Jujubes. In contact with the glands at the moment they are excited by the act of sucking, the Glycerine in these agreeable confections becomes actively healing. Sold only in tins, 7½d. and 1s. 1½d., labelled, 'JAMES EPPS & Co., Ltd., Homoeopathic Chemists, London.' Dr. Moore, in his work on 'Nose and Throat Diseases,' says: 'The Glycerine Jujubes prepared by James Epps and Co., are of undoubted service as a curative or palliative agent,' while Dr. Gordon Holmes, Senior Physician to the Municipal Throat and Ear Infirmary, writes: 'After an extended trial, I have found your Glycerine Jujubes of considerable benefit in almost all forms of throat disease.'

A REPORT FROM LAHORE.

MR. J. N. BOSE, a member of the Punjab Brahmo Somaj, writing from Lahore, under date February 25, says:—

The Rev. Mr. Harwood, sent on mission work to India by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, paid a short visit to Lahore the other day. He arrived here in the afternoon of the 21st of February, 1897. The members and sympathisers of the local Brahmo Somaj mustered strong on the railway platform to accord a hearty reception to the representative of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. Sardar Dyal Singh, a monied man of culture and refinement, and a member of the Punjab Brahmo Somaj, who bore all the expenses of the reverend gentleman during his stay at Lahore, sent his carriage and pair to the station to convey him to the hotel where he was accommodated. Having shaken hands with the gentlemen who went to receive him, Mr. Harwood drove to the hotel. It was on Sunday, on which the usual weekly prayer meetings of the Brahmo Somaj are held, that he reached here. After the minister had conducted the divine service in the vernacular, Mr. Harwood preached a most impressing, effective, and edifying sermon in English, the subject being 'The Relation of Religion to Science and Morality.' The next day he delivered a lecture in the Lahore Town Hall, the subject of which was 'Leaders of Liberal Religion in the West—Priestley, Channing, Parker, and Martineau.' The audience was not so large as was expected. On the day following he gave another discourse in the same place, on 'The Principles of Religious Liberalism.' On account of bad weather, and some other unfavourable circumstances, the audience was much more meagre than the day preceding. But those that were present enjoyed his learned lecture to their heart's content. On the same night was organised a social gathering of the Brahmo Somaj people in honour of the welcome guest. The special feature of this gathering was the presence of about fourteen ladies. [It will be remembered that ladies are conspicuously absent from such gatherings in India, a fact which Mr. Harwood has particularly noted]. Friendly conversation went on. The reverend gentleman was assailed with all sorts of questions concerning the religious movement in the West, of which he is a worthy exponent. The guest of the evening was entertained at a slight repast. He was then requested to say his parting words, as he was to leave Lahore on the morning of the next day. His valedictory address, though short, was exceedingly touching. He made a stirring appeal to the gentlemen of the Brahmo Somaj to compose their differences, at any rate, not to accentuate them. . . . His second request to the local Brahmos was to try to start the 'Postal Mission.' The enthusiasm of the local Brahmos ran very high. Though the audience was poor, yet his labour of love was amply repaid by the benefit derived by the Brahmo Somaj people from his discourses, sermon, and last, though not the least, from his company. A considerable number of the Somaj people was present also on the railway platform to see the reverend gentleman off.

To the number of Russian exiles in London has now been added one of the Dukhobortsi missionaries who acted as agents to Count Tolstoi. Mr. Tchertkoff has been banished by the Russian Government for an indefinite period.

AMERICAN NOTES.

THE Unitarian Church of Oakland, California, has just been celebrating its tenth anniversary. Oakland is one of the large residential suburbs of San Francisco, about six miles across the bay. There, just ten years ago, Rev. C. W. Wendte, coming to California as the District Superintendent of the American Unitarian Society, settled, visiting the five or six Unitarian centres, at that time all we had on the Pacific coast, and especially proposing to start a church in Oakland, a place with about 40,000 inhabitants. When Mr. Wendte settled there he knew only one Unitarian family, but after a few weeks he held an opening service, at which over a hundred persons were present, who organised into a church, at the same time starting a Sunday-school with five teachers and seven scholars. 'The lodgment once successfully made for a Unitarian church, the growth of the new movement surpassed the most sanguine expectations of its friends. The new organisation assumed for the first year half of their minister's salary, Mr. Wendte earning the remainder as superintendent of missions for the coast. The second year the society assumed two-thirds of the pastor's salary, and at the close of the third year required his entire time and service.' 'The desire of the society to possess a church edifice of its own, and not lead a vagrant existence in hired halls, was so great that, in January, 1889, only two years after its organisation, the trustees purchased and paid for a commodious and centrally located site, 150 feet by 100, at a cost of \$13,500 (£2700). The erection of a church edifice was next taken in hand. The money was subscribed so generously that the society determined to rear an edifice of stone that would be an ornament to the city and a monument to our liberal cause.' It is said to be one of the finest buildings in California. The main church, lighted by electricity, has 600 seats and opens by large doors into the Sunday-school room (or 'Chapel,' as it is called), adding 300 more sittings when required. This again continues to the 'parish house,' with its spacious parlours, pastor's study, reading room, etc., a two story building, 100 feet by 30, occupying the third side of a quadrangle. 'The church edifice is open all day and every evening for human uses. The reading-room is well stocked with current literature. The philanthropic activity of the members is commendable. They are moving spirits in the unsectarian charities of the city. No church bears so large a part in the public life of the city outside of denominations. Something perhaps of this success has been due to the leading idea of the whole enterprise. Said Mr. Wendte in his anniversary discourse: 'It was determined at the outset to gather, not a nondescript society, but a church, for worship, for the study and practice of the good life, and for helpfulness to the general community. It was determined, furthermore, that it should be a Christian church—using that word in a historic rather than dogmatic sense; and a Unitarian church—by which was meant the free, progressive, liberal, religious fellowship which bears that name. For our recruits we looked chiefly to the unchurched in the community. It is possible that we might have grown more rapidly in numbers if we had made more concession to diversities of belief. But, from the first, it was agreed among us, that we ought not to attempt to 'take in all creation.' It is interesting to remember that, while all this has been doing in Oak-

land itself, 'the Oakland church is especially proud of the fact that, by successive withdrawals of members and its own encouraging example, flourishing Unitarian churches have been founded in the adjacent towns of Alameda and Berkeley.'

We are glad to see announced, in the *Christian Register* the publication of a volume of sermons by Rev. John Cuckson, of Arlington Street Church, Boston. It is entitled 'Faith and Fellowship,' and contains seventeen sermons. It is not yet to hand, but will be obtainable shortly at Essex Hall.

Two years ago, the various 'Guilds' and 'Unity Clubs' existing in many of our American churches were united into a national organisation called 'The Young People's Religious Union.' This has grown apace, and now comprises over fifty societies in all parts of the United States, and they have just been holding a 'National Rally' in the Second Church, Boston,—of which we shall read more in next week's exchanges. The cardinal principles of the Union are declared to be 'Truth,' 'Worship,' and 'Service.' Its objects are:—

1. To foster the religious life;
2. To bring the young people of our several churches into closer relations with one another; and
3. To spread rational views of religion, and to put into practice such principles of life and duty as tend to uplift mankind.'

Rev. J. T. Sunderland, since his return to his home and his church at Ann Arbor, Mich., has been giving lectures on India to congregations so crowded that hundreds have had to be turned away. Some of the lectures have been on Sunday evenings and some on week nights. The lectures have been finely illustrated with stereopticon views made from pictures brought by Mr. Sunderland from India. B. H.

AUSTRALASIAN NOTES.

THE forty-fourth annual meeting of the members of the Melbourne Unitarian Church was held on February 2nd, 1897, and in presenting their annual report, the committee expressed regret that the satisfactory progress made the previous year had not been sustained, this being attributed in some measure to the ministerial difficulty that took place last year. However, as arrangements are being made for filling the pulpit, it is hoped that by the next annual meeting better progress may be reported. The balance-sheet showed that the church liabilities have slightly increased during the year, but the committee look forward hopefully, and, with the advent of a new pastor, it is expected that a more satisfactory state of affairs will result. The report also mentions the good work being done by the Unity Club Sunday-school and Ladies' Benevolent Fund Committee.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES, the eminent American spiritualistic lecturer and author, is at present on a visit to Australia, and has lectured to large audiences in the Masonic Hall, Melbourne, during the past few weeks. In spite of his advanced age, Dr. Peebles still retains a wonderful vitality; his voice is full and deep, and this, combined with his eloquent oratory, makes it difficult for the hearer to imagine that he is listening to a lecturer nearly eighty years of age. Dr. Peebles' lectures are always full of interest, and the vigorous defences of Liberal Christianity that find a place in his addresses make them of more than passing interest to members of our denomination.

ENCOURAGING progress is being made by 'Our Father's Church,' Melbourne. The Temperance Hall, where Rev. Archibald Turnbull has been conducting his services, has proved too small for the rapidly increasing congregation, and the 'Eastern Rooms,' a spacious hall, has been secured, and the services are now being held here.

A MUSICAL afternoon was held in the Melbourne Unitarian Church on Sunday, February 7, when an exceptionally large audience was present. The musical items were furnished by Mr. A. E. Momson, the church organist, and Mr. W. G. Barker, who sang 'Nazareth' and 'Behold, I stand at the door.' The address was given by Dr. Peebles, the subject being, 'The Age of Progress.'

MR. ALFRED J. TAYLOR, chief librarian of Hobart (Tasmania), who is at present on a visit to Melbourne, preached at the local Unitarian Church on Sunday evenings, January 24 and February 7. On the latter occasion, 'The Bible and Capital Punishment' was the theme chosen, and was ably dealt with, the preacher earnestly urging his hearers to use their best endeavours to have this trace of barbarism done away with. The subject was very opportune, as at present a youth of nineteen years, the son of highly respectable parents, is waiting his trial for murder, and, notwithstanding that the crime was of a most atrocious and deliberate kind, there seems a general feeling that, should the unfortunate young man be found guilty, steps should be taken to have the death penalty commuted. Let us hope that the time is not far distant when the disgusting and unchristian practice of judicial murder will be blotted out for ever from the statute books of all civilised lands.

In the current volume of the *Australian Herald* a series of illustrated articles on the various churches is being published, in the form of questions and answers. The February number of the *Herald* contains the Wesleyan denomination and its belief, and consists of a long list of queries furnished by the editor, with answers supplied by a member of the Wesley Church, Melbourne. The arrangement is unique; but, when the answers are furnished by a Wesleyan, we may be assured of having the true principles of the body put forward.

THE Sydney Church held its fortieth annual meeting recently, and its affairs appear prosperous, although some severe losses have been sustained through deaths and removals. There is a very harmonious feeling and much life. Thanks to the generous help given in response to the Rev. G. Walters's appeal on his recent visit to England, the finances are in a much healthier condition than formerly. A feature in the church's activities is the work of the Literary and Social Union, which made a contribution of nearly £60 to the church funds last year. VICTORIAN.

Who's Who? which has just appeared in a new edition, aims at telling the world what 'Who' does to amuse himself. A number of celebrities have, apparently, given the editor particulars of their chosen forms of recreation. Among them we find that Dr. Martineau 'has found amusement in rowing and walking,' not to say climbing hills. Dr. Temple enjoys 'light literature'; quite a number of divines go in for cycling, but the Bishop of Oxford enjoys 'making out pedigrees' and 'correcting proof sheets.' Well, there is no accounting for tastes!

OBITUARY.

MR. W. W. RUNDELL.

WE announced last week the death, on the 10th inst., of Mr. William Westcott Rundell, of Dulwich. His honourable career and upright character render it specially fitting that some brief account of his life should be preserved in these columns. The deceased gentleman, who had all but completed his eighty-first year, was born at Devonport, being the son of one of that worthy group of earnest Unitarians who helped to build the Unitarian chapel in Granby-street, Devonport, with their own hands. In early life he was engaged in the business of engraving, at Devonport; but in 1845 he was appointed secretary to the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, and removed to Falmouth. His scientific bent was indicated in a novel form of magnet, shown by him at the Exhibition of 1851; and in 1855 he was appointed secretary to the Liverpool Compass Committee, then busily engaged in the problems arising from deviations of the magnetic needle in iron vessels, many wrecks having occurred owing to errors of the compass. Mr. Rundell's services in working out this highly important subject were of the greatest value, and his reports were most warmly praised by the Astronomer Royal.

The following extract from Thomas Baines's 'Port of Liverpool' will be interesting in this connection. Mr. Baines wrote:—'Everyone who has visited the Mersey, or crossed its numerous ferries, since 1856 must have observed the large figures and marks so conspicuously painted on the dock walls facing the river. Few persons, however, even among those resident in Liverpool, unless they are immediately interested in nautical affairs, have any clear idea of the use to which these marks are applied. Each of them represents a particular magnetic bearing of a very tall chimney situated near the Vauxhall-road, which forms a prominent object from all parts of the river, so that wherever a ship may lie, her master, by looking towards this chimney, and observing the mark on the dock wall which appears nearest its base, is at once aware of its correct magnetic bearing, and has thus a test by which to judge of the correctness of the compass used for steering his vessel.'

As ships, when at anchor in the river, turn with the tide every six hours, their masters have constant opportunities of ascertaining the deviations of their compasses on as many points (of the compass) as they may think necessary. The whole process is, in fact, made so simple that it is now a matter of surprise that it was not introduced before. These marks were suggested by, and painted under the direction of, Mr. W. W. Rundell, secretary to the Liverpool Compass Committee—a company of gentlemen deputed from the various scientific and mercantile associations of the neighbourhood to investigate the subject of compass deviation, more especially as it affects ships wholly built of iron.

The value of the knowledge acquired and diffused as the result of the inquiries conducted on behalf of the Liverpool Compass Committee it is difficult (says the *Liverpool Post*) to over-estimate. It is not too much to claim that this knowledge has advanced the safety of life and property at sea to no inconsiderable degree. For some years Mr. Rundell was a member, and member of council, of the Historic Society of Lanca-

shire and Cheshire, and contributed papers to that society, and to the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society. In 1858 Mr. Rundell became secretary to the Salvage of Wrecked Property Association. From 1868 to 1874 he was secretary to the Liverpool Underwriters' Association, and from its commencement, in 1860, until its fusion with Lloyd's Register, in 1885, he was secretary to the Liverpool Underwriters' Registry for Iron Vessels. Since 1890 Mr. Rundell had resided with his married daughter at Dulwich, where his active and beneficent life was brought to a close.

MRS. C. H. JAMES, MERTHYR TYDFIL.

WE have to record with regret the death, on March 10, of Mrs. Charles Herbert James, of Brynteg, Merthyr Tydfil, widow of the late Mr. C. H. James, M.P., one of the most venerable and respected residents in the district, and one of the most consistent, liberal-minded, and charitable of Unitarians. The deceased lady completed her 80th year last summer, and had been in failing health for two years past. Amid all her sufferings, and they were often acute during the last few months, she maintained her mental vigour and cheerfulness. She died with the members of her family gathered around her.

Mrs. James, who was a daughter of Mr. Thos. Thomas, a Welsh yeoman farmer, and sister of the large soap manufacturers of that name, made the acquaintance of Mr. James while he was serving the law in Bristol, and when he became partner in a Merthyr firm of solicitors they were married. There were nine children of the union, one being dead, and of the survivors six being sons and two daughters. Of Mrs. James, a local journal says: 'The strong mind which was hers by natural inheritance became a broad mind by sympathies, education, training, and associations; and she was one of the most kind-hearted and benevolent of women, always striving to secure the exercise of a rational charity.' She belonged to a family every member of which strove to better the conditions of their fellow-men, and to strengthen popular liberties and secure political rights. Mr. Gladstone was her ideal of a great, fearless, conscientious, truly Christian statesman. But, with all her interest in politics, she much objected to display and ceremony, and so rarely appeared in public functions. To the Unitarian Church at Twynnyrobyn her death is a cruel loss.

The funeral took place on the 15th, and was witnessed by crowds of people whose sympathy and admiration had been won by the noble character of the deceased lady. The interment took place at Cefn cemetery, the Rev. Nestor Williams, former Unitarian pastor, conducting the service in the chapel, and present pastor, the Rev. D. J. Williams, that at the graveside. The latter gentleman had made special reference to the sad event from his pulpit on the previous day. He said:—'We sadly recognise that we have lost a strong pillar of our church, and that one more link which bound us to the past has been sundered. Though for a long time incapacitated from participating with us in public worship, truly can it be said that she was ever with us in spirit. Our simple worship and plain surroundings appealed with singular force to one who needed the aid of no ritual and ceremonial to bring her into intimate communion with the Father of

spirits. Apart from the loss which this congregation as a whole will suffer, as individuals most of us will feel that a true-hearted soul has departed from the circle of our affection.' Mr. Williams went on to speak of the heavy burden and responsibility of taking up the glorious legacy left to them by such lives as this. On the same evening, the Rev. Nestor Williams made touching reference to the event.

MR. F. BROWN, SUNDERLAND.

MR. FRANCIS BROWN, one of the oldest Unitarians in the northern counties, died on 13th inst., at his residence, Sunderland, in his 90th year. He came from Durham 70 years ago. He was connected with the Sunderland church for 50 years, and always took an active part in its affairs; but for the last five years, owing to his advancing age and becoming more and more feeble, he has been unable to attend. Up to the very last, however, his face would light up and give evidence of how warmly he was interested in matters concerning the church. On Sunday last Mr. G. Stirling delivered a memorial sermon, and dwelt at some length on Mr. Brown's simple, blameless life, his love of the right, and his hatred of the wrong. He said Mr. Brown was not an ambitious man. There was a singular union in his character of self-respect and modesty. He was a true lover of humanity. His faith in immortality had something of the clearness of vision of the seer. He believed in the innate divinity of human nature. He could never bring himself to think God would commit his children to eternal punishment on account of Adam's sin, or for any sin they themselves might commit, but held the larger faith—the final salvation of the entire human family. He might almost be said to have no name for God but Father.

MRS. HENRY RAWLINGS has matched her husband's admirable book, 'Practical Hints for Sunday School Teachers,' with an equally admirable collection of *Addresses and Illustrative Stories*, which will be good store for every teacher and superintendent. The materials have been gathered largely from the ten volumes of the 'Sunday School Helper'; but other sources, notably the *Christian Register*, have been laid under tribute. The result is a capital book, and we suspect that many a child will revel in its pages, although, primarily, it is not a reading-book in the ordinary sense of the word. We heartily commend it, not only for schools, but also for family use. (S.S.A., Essex Hall. Price 1s. 6d. net.)

THE *Reformer*, which has just stepped into the vacancy left by the cessation of the *National Reformer*, and the management of which is in the hands of Mr. Bradlaugh's daughter, Mrs. Bonner, and her husband, is a monthly magazine; it aims at reforms in all fields, advocates absolute freedom of thought, records the movements of progressive societies, and 'a corner for the young ones' is 'made a special feature in view of the difficulty of obtaining literature for children free from religious bias.' It distinctly opposes socialism as ordinarily understood, but believes there is a common ground for reformers of all schools. The venture is made at a critical time in the history of the secular movement, and if it succeeds it will be against odds. It is interesting to observe the kindly tone of several of the writers; but reform evidently implies fighting.

THE QUIET HOUR.

TO KEEP A TRUE LENT.

Is this a Fast—to keep
The larder leane,
And cleane,
From fat of veales and sheep?
Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?
Is it to faste an houre,
Or rag'd to go,
Or show
A down-cast look and sowre?
No; 'tis a Fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat,
And meat,
Unto the hungry soule.
It is to fast from strife,
From old debate,
And hate;
To circumsise thy life.
To show a heart grief-rent;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin;
And that's to keep thy Lent.

HERRICK.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

EACH man has in his chamber of mystery which he cannot, even if he would, unlock to his best beloved friend. And must that secret place really be the lumber room of all that is base and false in human kind? A secret place; yes, truly. Secret to all save One. But he who realises that, even as in that feigned country, the friend could penetrate the inmost consciousness of his friend, so here and now the friend of friends penetrates through every pulse and fibre of our thought, that the Unseen God knows us with a knowledge surpassing utterly all self-knowledge which we possess, will realise as well that the chamber of the soul which no human friend can visit may be the very presence chamber of the Holy Spirit. Either the cauldron of passion and lies, this walled-in room of our being, or the Holy of Holies, where shines with steadfast light the shechinah of the eternal presence. To the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem of old penetrated never any but the High Priest himself, there to meet the Most High God. To the Holy of Holies in the human soul may penetrate the footsteps of no brother. No comrade's voice may stir its solemn air. But there the soul, its own High Priest, retires within itself to view the beauty of the shining of God, and be wrapt in the purifying awe and joy of the Divine communion.

R. A. ARMSTRONG.

PRAYER.

MERCIFUL GOD, to whom in our weakness and ignorance we turn, and in whose might and wisdom is our only refuge, take us from the evil unto the good; from the shadow into the light; from our self-pleasing, and our self-accusing, into the fulness and peace of the life of love. Open our eyes and our hearts that so we may see and know the glory that Thou hast wrought for Thy people, the gracious purposes, the wondrous fulfillments of Thy creative will. When we feel most lonely, redeem us in love of the brethren; and when we feel most sin-stained, redeem us in the love of Christ. So with him and all the saints, may our lives for ever glorify Thee.—AMEN.

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LONDON, MARCH 27, 1897.

THE COMING CONFERENCE.

ON Tuesday week the sixth triennial National Conference will open at Sheffield. In view of recent and pending discussions it is interesting to observe the nature of its constituency. According to the 'Introductory Note' given in the Guide Book issued by the Sheffield General Reception Committee, 'The Conference was intended to include all churches which do not subscribe to any dogmatic creed.' It is further explained that 'The full title adopted to include all such churches is "The National Conference of "Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free "Christian, Presbyterian, and other "Non-subscribing or Kindred Congregations." The arrangements indicated by the Guide Book bear evidence of a good deal of organising work, and we hope our Sheffield friends will have every satisfaction in the results of their labours and generous forethought. The programme of meetings includes subjects of great importance to our churches, and, through them, we may believe, to undogmatic religion throughout the country. It is not for mortals to attain the ideal perfection, but the General Committee must be congratulated on having happily blended the 'practical' with the 'theoretical' in their choice of subjects for consideration. In regard to these subjects as a whole we say nothing here, but two subsidiary points connected with the programme seem to call for especial remark. Notice of motion has been given by the Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL as follows:—

That the Committee of the Triennial Conference, having been constituted on a basis by which it represents the various congregations and associations which form the Conference, it is hereby resolved that the Committee be instructed to hold regular meetings to consult, and when considered advisable to take action,

in matters affecting the well-being and interests of the congregations and societies which form the Conference, or to summon, if they deem it needful, a special meeting of the Conference: Further, that the Committee shall present to each Conference, a full report of its proceedings, and the action it has taken, for the approval or otherwise of the Conference.

As Mr. STEINTHAL is a member of the Committee of the Conference, it must be presumed that he has brought the subject of his motion before the Committee, and the fact that it has been left to him to propose the resolution in his individual capacity represents, probably, the state of opinion on the subject. The delegates will, doubtless, have little difficulty in coming to a conclusion upon this matter. Taking the last point first, we can imagine no serious objection to the presentation of a report by the Committee, except possibly that the interval of three years may tend to make ancient history of a good deal that such a report would contain. On the other hand, the constituency may reasonably expect some definite account of the Committee's proceedings. As to the power of summoning a special meeting of the Conference, there seems to be no need for a resolution, as the meeting at Nottingham was precisely a case in point, and the Committee would hardly need stronger warrant than is afforded by that precedent. The most debatable portion of the motion is the first, and here, unless we are mistaken, it will meet with the most adverse criticism. It will be asked in what manner the consultations of a widely-scattered Committee can beneficially assist in the affairs of particular congregations or societies, and whether the erection of a new piece of machinery of this kind is really wanted. From the point of view of symmetrical organisation, no doubt there is much to be said for the propriety of rounding off our local systems of control and administration by a supreme National Council. But with sincere respect for the proposers of such theoretical symmetry, we cannot help thinking that we have, perhaps, gone as far in the direction of ecclesiastical organisation as we can profit by at present. Practically, the British and Foreign Unitarian Association covers the ground suggested; it has funds—a very important consideration,—and, though it bears a denominational name, its sympathy and assistance, it need hardly be said, are not given in any partial fashion. As has been said repeatedly, for suggestions of the kind are not novel, the Association is practically the executive arm of the community that meets for consultation at the Conference. Any attempt to alter this position would, we are persuaded, involve serious and needless difficulties.

The other point to which we have alluded is that which forms the subject of the Rev. V. D. DAVIS's letter to us this week. With the spirit of that letter many of us are in complete agreement. We believe, moreover, that Mr. DAVIS is wise in warning us against the policy of running away from our difficulties, a policy which has a knack of mas-

querading in the disguise of tactical shrewdness. At the same time, if the Conference Committee is to take notice of public representations at all, we do not see how, except under the most pressing sense of duty, it could have set aside the many resolutions it received deprecating a discussion as to the Advisory Committees. The Conference Committee, of which the present writer is not a member, may have had in mind an ancient example of holding our peace even from good words while 'the wicked' are before us. Certainly the temper in which the subject has been discussed has not been one to encourage the friends of peace and order; and we can but suppose that, amongst the considerations which have led to the shelving of the question by the Conference Committee is that, whatever resolutions may be passed, whether by the Conference, or by assemblies, or by Advisory Committees, or by any other body, each of our congregations is just as free as it was before to choose its ministers and to follow the leadings of the Spirit, whithersoever they tend. That, at any rate, is the fact; and if we had much rather, for our part, that the Conference could have formulated a declaration of religious principles that would have been endorsed *ab omnibus et ubique*, it is not from any fear lest, failing such a formal declaration, those principles should be in any degree abandoned. There may be no resolution proposed on the subject, and we suppose there will not be, but the quiet words of the Sheffield Committee's note are as effective as they are explicit:—"The Conference was intended to include all churches which do not subscribe to any dogmatic creed." That is enough on the negative side. We heartily pray that all the Churches of the Conference may prove themselves more abundantly serviceable in their liberty as witnesses for GOD and followers of CHRIST in the promotion of His kingdom upon earth.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE HISTORICAL CHRIST.

UNDER this title the Master of Balliol, DR. EDWARD CAIRD, contributes a short article to the current issue of the *New World*. The article consists, we understand, of a paper read by its distinguished author at a meeting of the newly-formed Martineau Club, which is connected with Manchester College, Oxford, and in which temporary residents in that city may find a congenial meeting-place. It was a slice of good fortune for the young club to secure the sympathetic services of so eminent a teacher, and if the theme was not actually chosen with a special view to the constituency of the club, it certainly had a special significance for Unitarians and Liberal Christians generally. Everyone who is at all familiar with the course of serious thought in the present day knows that as in philosophy there has been an attempt to dismiss the later Hegelians and to get 'back to KANT,' so in Christian thought there has been

and remains a disposition to disregard as much as possible all materials and speculations later than the date of the earliest gospel material. Amid this oldest material quest is made for the actual CHRIST as he appeared to men, and lived and taught amongst them. It is hardly going too far to say that everyone will admit the freshening influences of this movement 'back to CHRIST.' On the one hand the details of the life of CHRIST's generation have been presented to the world anew, and with all the wealth of modern knowledge and the suggestiveness of free and unconventional criticism. On the other, the centre of attraction has been shifted from the mind of the Church concerning CHRIST to the 'mind of the 'Master' himself, and there can be but few who have made the effort who have not felt invigorated by the attempt to see and understand him without the intervention of even the most devoted interpreters. Dr. CAIRD, noticing all this, and in a way approving, gives a timely warning. Admitting that it is beneficial thus to unravel the web of thought and weave it again for ourselves from the beginning, he points out two highly important facts. The first is rather chilling in its effect upon people who sanguinely expect to find absolute certainty in their pursuit of the picture of the 'historical CHRIST.' Deal as we may, we have to form our own ideal from an already idealised portrait. If we decline St. PAUL's authority and pass behind the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics, we find, not only in LUKE and MATTHEW, but also in MARK, the evident signs of a busy 'Christian consciousness' which at its earliest date has begun the process of interpretation, exaltation, and glorifying. To a philosopher like Dr. CAIRD, this is not only natural in history, but necessary in experience. A man is known to us, he would say, by the influences he brings to bear upon us, and the full content of those influences is not to be gauged in the first hour of contact. We may seem to know our friend best when we see his bodily presence and hear his voice; but experience shows that he must needs be taken away before we see him as he really and essentially was. So we pass to the second of the important considerations which Dr. CAIRD puts before us. It is that which is suggested in this memorable sentence:—'Though we grow simple again as we grow older, the simplicity of age is not the simplicity of youth.' The application of this principle is evident upon a thoughtful survey of any of the leading reconstructions of gospel history which have appeared in our generation as 'Lives of JESUS.' In RENAN's 'Vie' there is much to quicken—much that has deeply touched the minds of his readers. But how much of it is a 'Vie de RENAN' rather than a 'Vie de JESU'? Turn again to a book which brings the 'simplicity of CHRIST' down to its smallest dimensions, while at the same time leaving it germinal of the loftiest conceptions; in Dr. MARTINEAU's 'Seat of Authority' we cannot fail to perceive

the evidences alike of the author's rich and varied mental history and experience, but also of his study of the history and thoughts of the whole Christian movement. There is a well-known phenomenon in regard to the reflection of light by certain mirrors on the back of which designs have been impressed, while the face is all true and level. When a beam of light falls on such a mirror, the unseen and unsuspected figures on the back show themselves in the reflection. In a similar way the antecedents of every mind inevitably affect its present judgments, however loyally it strives to dismiss all bias and prejudice. It comes to this, then, that in our day, after all the thinking and working of eighteen centuries of Christianity, the devout student can at best hope to reach, not the simplicity of the first age—it would probably be most unsatisfying if he could—but a simplicity comparable to that of full maturity, when the experiments of youth are over and the lessons of life have been learnt. Such, as we understand him, is the view of the Master of Balliol, and though we must confess that we find here and there in his dozen pages expressions which we should like respectfully to criticise, were this a fit occasion, we believe that the sound wisdom of his main argument will commend itself to thoughtful minds. He says 'the true attitude for thought which the modern Christian should adopt, is to look upon his religion, not simply as loyalty to a Master in whom was once for all revealed all that he seeks to attain, but as adherence to a living principle which is working in the lives of himself and others, stimulating the development of new powers in humanity, freeing men from themselves, taking grudges and fears out of their hearts, and binding them together in a new solidity of life.' Again, accepting TERTULLIAN's doctrine 'that the rise of Christianity is the most decisive stage in the development of man's consciousness of himself and of his relation to God,' Dr. CAIRD says, finally, that he regards 'Christian' as 'the permanent adjective by which we must define the growing ideal of humanity.' These sentences indicate the broad and catholic spirit of this notable essay. From what dry and profitless discussions as to 'What is a Christian?' and into what fruitful sympathies and activities we should be led, if all who love the name of CHRIST could be brought to share thoughts like these!

Nobody will deny that the clergy who derive an income from tithes have been hard hit of late years, but why the clergy of the Established Church should alone be pitied by Parliament and recommended for public assistance we cannot see. 'Ministers of all denominations' in rural districts have suffered equally with the 'clergy,' as some of our friends could sorrowfully prove. But we suppose all this is done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken saying, This is the Parliament that shall comfort the landowner, and make fat the Church of England in the face of her foes.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME; and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the sender.]

THE POLICY OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

SIR,—I shall go to the Conference at Sheffield with a clearer conscience and a freer mind, if you will allow me to say beforehand that I am one of those who are astonished and disappointed at the policy of the Committee (following, I suppose, the lead of a widely expressed desire) in refusing to allow the consideration of the Advisory Committee question and all that it involves.

A question vital to the interests of our churches, affecting their fundamental principles, was distinctly referred by a Provincial Assembly to the larger judgment of the National Conference, and I cannot understand on what ground consistent with the dignity and influence of the Conference the reference is declined.

I can only take it to be a confession, on the part of those who agree to this policy that we are a very feeble folk, that there is in us as a people no unity of spirit that can find adequate expression, and no bond of peace sufficiently strong to make it possible for us to discuss a burning question with any good result.

And yet, in the highest interest of our churches, if, indeed, we are a people and have any vital unity and any fundamental principle for which we stand, it ought to have been possible so to speak out as to clear the air of hesitation and distrust, to confirm the loyalty of waverers, and to renew our consecration to a great and sacred cause.

The special question of the functions of an Advisory Committee was only the occasion for the raising of a much more fundamental and heart-searching question as to the limits of our religious fellowship and the ultimate foundation on which our churches rest. This is a question which is not settled by being passed over in silence, and I confess that I had hoped very earnestly that at the Conference some strong declaration might have been made, that would have set the issue clearly before us and have given a new energy of faithfulness to all the members of our Free Churches.

For this, surely, is the foundation on which we rest, that we are members of Free Churches, and that the Conference is an assembly of the representatives of Free Churches.

What does that mean? Not, as some appear to think, that we set freedom as an end above religious truth, and have no other bond of unity; but that we are convinced that only in the freedom of the spirit can we have a real grip of religious truth, and in our churches be led in God's way. We declare, as our fundamental principle, that we will trust only in God, that we will bind ourselves by no creed, that we will keep ourselves free to ask only and always of Him what is the truth. We may not set up any barrier of exclusion. Our churches, if they are churches, are not of ourselves, but of God; and it is with us a sacred trust to keep an open door for all those who desire to come in and to have fellowship with us simply on this one ground of surrender in spirit to the living God.

There are those who tell us that this is too vague, and we have no security against

false and mischievous views. If that unhappily should prove to be the case, it would be a sign, not that we had adopted a wrong principle in our churches, but that in ourselves the true life and the power of the spirit had failed, and that God was not with us in our union. The remedy would be, not in any dogmatic limitation or exclusion of heretics, but in a new energy of self-surrender and loyalty to the Highest, a more earnest endeavour to manifest in ourselves and in the life of our churches the power of the better truth. It is very likely that some among us hold views which others dislike and distrust. Then let each be more true to his own truth, as God makes it clear to him; let him live and labour in the freedom of the spirit and in perfect charity with others, and understand that the issue is not in his hands, but with God. If anyone attempts by any other means than that of the persuasive power of higher truth to secure the acceptance of his views in a Free Church, he is a traitor to the first principle of our spiritual faith.

And does not this cover the very serious question of our Christian discipleship, and our place among Christian Churches? Surely in this also we must dare to trust in God and the power of His truth. It is He who reveals to us the grace and truth in Jesus. The enlightenment of that supreme example, the inspiration of his leadership, the growing power of his true spirit in the hearts of men, these are all our Father's gift. They do not come to us as any external authority, but in each lowly disciple is found the inward witness of the Spirit, and we know that this is the true life for us, and so we also are to be children of God. How shall we make a dogma of Jesus or his name? We have simply to show that we are Christians by living in the power of that truth, which we find in him and with him.

And if at any time a church in our fellowship should invite the services of a minister who was unwilling to call himself a Christian, it would depend on the real spirit of the man what we thought of it. It might be to us a matter of most serious regret and pain, but, even so, we should have no right to judge our brethren or attempt to limit by compulsion the freedom of their choice. It might make us ashamed of our own slackness and the poverty of our testimony in the past. And certainly it ought to come to us as an urgent call of duty, with renewed consecration and a more ardent spirit of discipleship to seek at last to prove the higher truth and the redeeming power of our Christian faith. But if on that account we should abandon the fellowship of our churches, that would be to abandon the trust we have received in our inheritance of freedom and that place in the household of God in which He has called us to His service.

The needs of the day most urgently demand of us unity of spirit and of purpose in the life and work of our churches. The National Church is rapidly falling back into the hands of the sacerdotalists, and only in a most perverted sense can it be called Catholic. The great bodies of Nonconformists are drawing together into a new dogmatic as well as spiritual union, from which, as heretics, we are shut out. Then what is our duty? Not, surely, to make another little orthodoxy of our own, but to show, in however humble measure, that a church can be truly Catholic and truly free.

At the meeting of the Conference in Birmingham in 1885, Mr. Armstrong, who

was the preacher, declared this to be the essential character of the churches there represented. And what better title could we have, as exactly describing what we mean, the foundation principle on which we rest and the ideal at which we aim, than this of a Union of Free Catholic Churches? The doctrinal tone and Christian spirit of the churches must always depend on the faithfulness of their members, with whom the price of freedom must be perpetual vigilance. And the union must be open to all who desire to come in, who are willing to trust in the freedom of the Spirit, and to commit themselves without reserve to the service of the living God.

In what I have now written I have referred to no special circumstances of the past few months, but I believe that I have stated, and I hope with some clearness, the true principle on which alone all such questions as have arisen ought to be settled. It is the principle which, if I am not mistaken, Dr. Drummond was ready to maintain at Brighton, and which I feel very strongly the National Conference ought now to have been asked by a direct declaration to affirm. V. D. DAVIS.

Liscard, March 15.

MR. W. R. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN, who has been lecturing at South Place a good deal lately, commences, at Essex Hall, on Sunday, a series of three morning lectures, the first subject being 'The Twilight of the Gods.'

THE new handbook to be issued by the Sunday School Association in place of the monthly issues of the *Sunday School Helper* will, we hear, bear the title of *The Helper*—a decided improvement on the first suggestion. We understand the volume is in active preparation.

WORKERS' AID SOCIETY.—Since the report published in THE INQUIRER last spring, the hon. sec. of this society has received eighty-three articles of good and useful clothing. These, and a number of garments purchased with the balance in hand and two kind donations, have been forwarded during the year and at Christmas to the Nursing Home, Winifred House, for the use of the children there, and to three of the London missions. A small parcel of clothing was also sent to the Convalescent Home at Blackpool connected with the Manchester District Sunday School Association. The secretary has again the pleasure of thanking the following members for their constant and generous help, and of congratulating them on the good quality and usefulness of their contributions:—Mrs. Tarring, Miss E. Haselden, Mrs. H. C. Briggs, Mrs. E. H. Morton, Mrs. Mills, Miss Mills, Miss Isaacs, Miss A. Isaacs, Miss Hemming, Miss E. Preston, Miss Farrar, Miss H. Farrar, Miss Frost, Miss Crowe, Mrs. Woolley, Mrs. Pearce, Mrs. Symonds, Mrs. Ling, Mrs. Hines, Mrs. Sporle, Mrs. Trowbridge, Misses Patrick, Harris, Jackson, Barnby, Heaviside, J. Gairdner, Mrs. G. Isaacs, Miss Potter, Mrs. Yeland, Mrs. Ch. Morton, Miss Parkes, Mrs. Buckley, Miss Purdie, Miss Mitchell. The subscriptions and donations have yielded £1 11s.; balance from last year, 8s. 2d.—£1 19s. 2d. The expenses—including postage, carriage of parcels, stationery, and purchase of clothing—amount to £1 10s., leaving a balance of 9s. 2d. to be carried forward into next year. The sec., Mrs. Goodwyn Barnby, will be happy to give any further information respecting the Workers' Aid Society—Hill Foot, Sidmouth.

CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES.

BLACKFRIARS MISSION AND STAMFORD STREET CHAPEL.

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION AND EXTENSION.

AN appeal is made this week for help toward the extension and strengthening of one of the most important and altogether admirable parts of our London work. For a long time it has been felt that the premises of the Blackfriars Mission, well situated as they are amid the turmoil and squalour of the New Cut, were quite inadequate, and in some other ways unsuitable for the little host of clubs and societies which have been born therein. At the same time the difficulty of maintaining the neighbouring chapel in Stamford-street as a self-supporting place of worship has increased steadily, suggesting at last whether the approaching termination of the mission lease should not be seized as an opportunity for a concentration of forces and establishments. At last a scheme has been elaborated, and a joint committee of the two institutions has been appointed to carry it out. We spoke last year of the desperate poverty of this district, and of the splendid fight which successive ministers and missionaries have made to establish themselves as beneficent social and religious influences in one of the darkest spots of 'Darkest London.' A great work has already been accomplished; what is now wanted is the opportunity and means of deepening and extending it, and we are confident that no more deserving call for help has been uttered among our churches for a long time past.

This question was naturally the chief business at the annual meeting of the Mission on Thursday night. The Committee had issued to subscribers a statement of which the substance is as follows:—

Owing to the approaching expiration of the lease of the present rooms, the Committee of the Blackfriars Mission find themselves face to face with the necessity of seeking new premises in which to carry on their work. The time seems opportune for devising some fresh scheme for preserving and developing the religious and social work carried on by the mission. The district affords a large and important field for work, if carried on under what may be called 'modern' conditions.

It has been represented to the Committee that, owing to deaths and removals, and the growing poverty of the neighbourhood, the congregation at Stamford-street finds it impossible to carry on its work as a self-supporting church; and it is believed that if the Blackfriars Mission took over, or became amalgamated with, the Stamford-street Chapel, it would be possible to greatly extend the special work which the mission exists to promote. The mission and the chapel together already possess considerable influence in the district. Between the two places there are nearly 500 Sunday-school scholars, nearly 1000 people subscribe to the provident bank, and at least 200 people living in the immediate neighbourhood attend the religious services more or less regularly, though of late the attendances have declined through not having any settled minister. There are also clubs and classes for young men and women, which have in all upwards of 100 members. The district is so densely populated that there is practically no limit to the work which a strong mission might accomplish if properly equipped.

At a recent conference attended by representatives of the Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel, it was resolved:—1. That it is very desirable to establish a church and mission in the crowded working-class district of Lambeth and Southwark, in the immediate neighbourhood of Blackfriars-road and the New Cut. 2. That the committees and subscribers of Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel

be invited to unite their funds and forces, in order to form the nucleus of such a church and mission. 3. That a special fund be raised, in order to adapt the buildings at Stamford-street Chapel and lecture-hall for the work of such a church and mission. 4. That the committees of the Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel be requested to appoint a joint committee to place the foregoing resolutions before their subscribers and supporters for their approval; and that, in the event of their agreeing to the scheme of amalgamation, a special committee be formed by this joint committee, who shall issue a public appeal, supported by some influential names, and arrange for carrying out the practical details of the scheme on the lines laid down in the resolutions.

The Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS presided over Thursday's meeting, being supported by Mr. C. F. Pearson (treasurer), Mr. Percy Preston (secretary), the Rev. F. Wood (missionary), Dr. Brooke Herford, the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie, Mr. David Martineau, Mr. S. S. Tayler, and many lady friends of the mission. The TREASURER explained that the financial situation was comparatively satisfactory, the balance due to him being only £103! Mr. PRESTON's report (the seven-tenth of its kind) and the Rev. FRANCIS WOOD's deeply interesting statement showed a noble record of work done during the past year in connection with services, visitation, provident bank, Sunday-school and week-day classes, mothers' meetings, girls' and boys' clubs, bands of hope, country holidays, and convalescents' cottage, etc. In moving the adoption of these reports,

Mr. HOPPS said that mission work of this kind seemed to him the most certainly blessed and beautiful work that men could attempt. He very seldom read a sermon that was entirely satisfactory as Mr. Wood's report was. What was Jesus Christ but a domestic missionary—a great divine missionary to the poor? As to the amalgamation scheme, he had felt for forty years that all missionary work should be within the embrace of the church.

The Rev. T. E. M. EDWARDS seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Dr. BROOKE HERFORD moved a resolution approving the amalgamation proposals, requesting the committee to complete the negotiations, and pledging the meeting to cordially support the scheme. There was still a vast need, and there was no place in London where the best of this kind of work was more wanted than here. He hoped they would make a really effective missionary headquarters, and that they would not be distrustful in asking the poor destitute rich (laughter) to give them the means of doing so.

The Rev. W. C. BOWIE, in seconding, said there were no less than ten thousand children in attendance at Board schools within a ten minutes' radius of the mission; and he related, from ten years' intimate knowledge of the district, many other interesting facts to show the unique opportunities of humanitarian and religious work which it offered. A large constituency had already been made; and the new departure would, especially under such a strong and attractive personality as they had in their 'mind's-eye,' be productive of untold good.

Mr. S. S. TAYLER and Mr. D. MARTINEAU having supported the resolution, it was carried with one dissentient; and the officers having been re-elected and the committee appointed, Mr. Hopps was warmly thanked for his presence in the chair.

MANCHESTER AND DISTRICT.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

I ATTENDED the annual meeting of the Manchester Ministry to the Poor the other evening at the Memorial Hall. The Rev. S. A. STEINTHAL was in the chair; and I do not remember a more interesting meeting of a similar character. This institution is passing through a crisis owing to a variety of circumstances to which such institutions are at times liable; but the work in which it is engaged is so honourable and necessary, and the way in which that work is being discharged is so efficient, that a sympathetic perusal of the annual report would stir any philanthropically disposed person to extend a generous support. This ministry to the poor is avowedly unsectarian; no 'ism' is taught as such in its schools and pulpits; but it is a charge upon and is maintained by our Manchester Unitarians; and it is an institution of which they ought to feel very proud. Mr. Steintal, who has taken a keen interest in the mission for many years, said that it was founded in 1833, and was the first Domestic Mission in the country; and that it had from the beginning maintained the principles advocated by Dr. Tuckerman. Its aims are the highest possible for any philanthropic society, and in the past its efforts have met with a large measure of success. In 1833, it was started without a building, and the missionary just paid his visits from house to house, seeking to arouse that spirit amongst the poor people of the neighbourhood which should make them feel they were truly children of God. The Rev. W. J. CLARKE, of the Hurst Street Mission, Birmingham, delivered a most interesting and stimulating address, dealing mainly with the features of his own work at Birmingham and the results of his observation and experience regarding the virtues and vices and needs of the poor. He told us of his advice bureau, and how admirably it worked in clearing away many a misunderstanding and difficulty. People came to him for counsel in domestic troubles, in business uncertainties, and sometimes when they had been guilty of wrong-doing and desired to find the path back to virtue again. This struck me as being a grand branch of Mr. Clarke's work, and as showing what a confidence in his friendship and wisdom and secrecy was manifested in the appreciation in which this bureau is held. It was a matter of surprise for our mission workers to learn that by means of wholesome attractions he succeeds in drawing an attendance of three and four hundred to his Mothers' Meetings. Work in this direction is done at our Manchester Missions; but with by no means such marked success. Of course, the circumstances may be very different; but Mr. Clarke's address will stimulate our ambition, while he, too, may have gained something from a knowledge of our characteristic methods. He spoke a forcible and timely word about the Mission buildings. They should be as bright and beautiful and clean as we can make them, so as to prove successful rival attractions to those institutions in the same neighbourhood which tempt men to very different ends. Bright, wholesome entertainments also are almost a necessity for the poor, and if pure ones are not provided, the people have no alternative, and go to others of a different character. In his experience he had seen in no rank of society so much Christian denial and self-sacrifice and mutual helpfulness as

amongst the poor; and he was convinced that pure sympathy and Christian love were the only influences which in the long run could set the inequalities and injustices and oppressions of society right. We were much interested to hear about the working of the Birmingham institution for providing poor children with clothing, and the way in which it is supervised and helped by the police. For parents to sell or pawn such clothing is an offence against the law which is strictly enforced; consequently, out of 8000 gifts of clothing to half-naked children, there were only five cases, all told, of attempts being made to turn them into money. The police discharge their part of the work in such a spirit of friendliness and sympathy that it has a perceptible influence in making the people more generally law-abiding, and they less frequently come into conflict with these officers of the law. There is a division of our own district where the police, under Superintendent Bent, a humane and benevolent man, engage in similar work, every winter running a large soup kitchen for the poor children as well; but we have yet to see it adopted centrally.

The published reports of our missionaries at Renshaw-street and Willert-street are very satisfactory records of work done. As Mr. Bishop only properly commenced his ministry at Willert-street at the beginning of the year, there was not much for him to record. However, although everything was at a very low ebb when he started, they have, under his organisation and practical help, advanced by leaps and bounds, until they are already in a condition of prosperity which has scarcely been surpassed in the history of the mission. There is an earnestness and ambition about Mr. Bishop which is an augury of active operations at Willert-street. The report of the work engaged in at Renshaw-street reflects most creditably upon the Rev. S. H. Street and his helpers. The savings bank there is a splendid agency for good, practically unlimited in its scope, if only more lady visitors volunteered to engage in the work. £226 was received in deposits during last year, in three or four thousand amounts; and the great bulk of this would never have been saved at all, if the ladies had not gone round to the homes and collected it. Think of what this means as a lesson in thrift, of what influence these ladies must necessarily exert upon the housewives with whom they have a few minutes' weekly chat, and how such forethought saves them from a world of poverty and care! Mr. Street has been able to send sick children away to a Sanatorium, and invalided adults to distant hospitals, where the special treatment is helpful to their disorders. He has organised musical and flower and harvest and Christmas festivals for the people, and catered for their religious needs in a variety of ways. The Sunday-school has grown so much that it has reached the limits of the accommodation. A library is well patronised, and the social evening for teachers and elder scholars is much appreciated. The attendance at Band of Hope meetings has averaged 105, and there is both a mothers' meeting and a women's friendly union. Sol-fa classes, junior drill, carpentry, sewing, book-keeping, fretwork classes, girls' club, boys' club, cricket club, choir practice, recreation evenings, popular lectures, entertainments, reading room, etc., etc., are also among the many activities connected with this mission. Last summer 24 boys and 24 girls were sent into the country for a week in four

detachments, under suitable supervision, the missionary himself taking a cottage in the same place, so that his own family might share the responsibility. 'It was their aim to be out the whole day in the splendid fresh air, which brought such roses to the children's cheeks, and gave them hearty appetites for the plain, but abundant, meals provided.' Who can fail to admire work of this sort, or deny that such a ministry to the poor is worthy of sympathetic and generous support? Yet, at the present time, the institution is languishing for lack of funds; it has been compelled to realise its investments (of which it, alas, has too few!), and its yearly expenditure is over £100 more than its income. This is a lamentable state of affairs, and ought not to be. Unitarians have generally risen to the needs of such a necessary and laudable piece of work; and Manchester Unitarians have never in the past neglected pecuniary obligations of this sort. Perhaps the real state of affairs only needs to be known to be relieved, and that, as the result of this report, new and increased subscriptions will be sent to the treasurer, Mr. R. C. Potter, or the secretary, the Rev. Wilfrid Harris, M.A. FIDELIS.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES.

[Notices and Reports for this Department should be as brief as possible, and be sent in by Tuesday Morning.]

Ashton-under-Lyne.—The second lecture of the 'Forward Movement' here took place on Sunday evening last, in the Mechanics' Institution, the preacher being the Rev. J. C. Street, whose subject was, 'Who was Jesus Christ, and what did he teach?' The large room was densely packed, many people standing round the walls and in the door ways. There was an audience of more than 500, and quite 100 people had to go away unable to gain admission. The Rev. W. Harrison, of Stalybridge, who was present, was asked to conduct an overflow service in a smaller room in the building, and consented, but as all the hymn books had been given out, the idea had to be abandoned. Mr. Street's lecture, which was delivered without notes, was entirely affirmative in character, and seemed to please and interest the large audience. About one third of the audience were Unitarians from Dukinfield and Stalybridge. The singing was hearty, and the music good.

Belfast.—The annual meeting of the Domestic Mission to the Poor was held in the Central Hall, Rosemary-street, on March 15, the chair being taken by Rev. Douglas Walsley. Amongst those present were the Revs. E. I. Frigg, A. Ashworth, W. Weatherall, and George Hare Patterson (missionary). Miss Bruce (the secretary to the mission) read the annual report, which showed that the most important business of the year in connection with the mission was a change of missionary, the Rev. C. Thrift having left the mission in order to become the minister of Ballyhemlin congregation. The committee, after due consideration, invited Mr. G. H. Patterson, of Ipswich, to come over, and he entered on his duties on November 15. The committee had every reason to hope that Mr. Patterson would become a useful and successful missionary. The committee had to report a slight falling off in the number of annual subscribers, and also in the amount of subscriptions. £50 of the sum which appeared to their credit was a memorial gift from the family of the late Mr. John R. Musgrave, and would be invested. The financial statement was submitted by Mr. M'Fadden, after which Mr. Patterson read the missionary report, which gave details of the timely aid that had been given the poor during the past three months, and concluded by stating that Mr. Patterson hoped to make the pulpit of the mission a centre of intellectual and spiritual helpfulness, and to direct the people to the source of all strength and consolation. The chairman, in moving the adoption of the reports, spoke with pride and pleasure of the fact that the congregation of the First Church continued to keep in the front as regarded the support of the mission, but he did not want the support of the mission to be confined to one congregation. The Rev. E. I. Frigg, seconded the motion, and the reports were adopted. The committee for the ensuing year

having been elected, on the motion of Rev. W. Weatherall, seconded by Mr. James Davidson, the following resolution was adopted with acclamation:—'That the best thanks of the meeting be given to the ladies and gentlemen who have assisted in the work of the mission, and especially to Dr. Sydney Brice Smyth and Dr. John Campbell for the advice they have given to the sick poor.' During the evening a programme of vocal music was contributed by Miss M'Kisack, Mrs. Cunningham, and Mr. Gordon.

Bermondsey.—An 'open conference' was held on Sunday afternoon last, at which the Rev. Harold Rylett delivered an address on 'If Christ came to Bermondsey, what would he find?' Mr. J. Havelock Wilson, M.P., presided, and there was a large attendance, including Mr. Richard McGhee, M.P., Mr. J. G. Holburn, M.P., and Mr. Leslie M. Johnson, editor of the *Seamen's Chronicle*. At the conclusion of Mr. Rylett's address discussion was invited. It soon became obvious that a small group of Socialists had attended for the purpose of attacking Mr. Wilson, Mr. McGhee, and Mr. Johnson, for their opposition to Socialism. The proceedings were occasionally sufficiently lively to afford a reporter an opportunity of giving a grossly exaggerated account of what took place.—On the following evening Mr. E. J. C. Morton, M.P., at the usual meeting of the Social Union, gave a most valuable and interesting lecture on Joseph Mazzini. [Mr. A. W. Harris, who has been long connected with the Bermondsey congregation, wishes us to state that he is not the 'Mr. Harris' whose name has appeared in some newspapers as a disturber of the Sunday afternoon meeting referred to. We understand that this 'Mr. Harris' is an entire stranger to the congregation.—Ed. Inq.]

Birmingham: Hurst-street Mission.—The fiftieth annual meeting of the Hurst-street Mission Provident Institution was held on Tuesday evening last week, Mr. W. J. Clarke presiding over a large attendance of members. In moving the adoption of the annual report and statement of accounts, he pointed out that they were again of the most encouraging and satisfactory character. Fortunately for them, it had been the rule now for some years that their income should exceed their expenditure, and to this rule the last year had been no exception, the surplus of income over expenditure being £37 6s. 11d. The accumulated fund now stood at a sum which worked out at an average of £18 2s. 6d. for each member insured for sick pay. It was a great gratification to him to have the privilege of presiding over that fiftieth annual meeting. From 1846 to 1896 was a long journey, either in the life of a man or of an institution, and, fortunately for all its members, the Hurst-street Provident Institution had accomplished that long journey with an unbroken record of past prosperity and usefulness to look back upon, and a future of at least equal prosperity and usefulness to look forward to. He thought they owed a deep debt of gratitude to those whose wise foresight, thoughtful consideration for others, and sterling business capacity had enabled them to organise their Provident Institution on so firm and lasting a basis. And he hoped they would also agree with him in thinking that the society should be handed on to those who would come after them in at least as prosperous a condition. The reports were heartily and unanimously adopted, Mr. Clarke being again elected as president, Mr. E. Doubleday as vice-president, Mr. H. S. Brown as treasurer, and Mr. F. G. Gardner as secretary; the formal business closing with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Clarke for his services to the Society as president during the past twelve years. A most encouraging and thoroughly enjoyable gathering was brought to an end by a fruit and coffee supper, a concert, and a dramatic performance, the characters in the latter being admirably sustained by Miss F. Stevens, Mr. John Dall, and Mr. A. W. Dabbs.

Birmingham (Postal Mission).—The fourth annual meeting was held on March 18, at the Committee Room, 65, Hagley-road, Edgbaston. The President (Miss M. C. Gittins) presided. There was a fair attendance, amongst those present being Lady Martineau, Mrs. C. G. Beale, the Rev. L. P. and Mrs. Jacks, Miss Martineau, Mrs. Richard Peyton, Mrs. T. W. Ryland, Mrs. Brooke Smith, Mrs. Howard Smith, and the Rev. Joseph Wood. The Secretary (Mrs. Herbert New) read the report for the past year, which showed a satisfactory increase in the number of letters received and written, and pamphlets distributed. The treasurer's report showed a small deficit. The President, in moving the adoption of the reports, gave a short account of some of the year's work. The resolution was seconded by the Rev. L. P. Jacks, who spoke in appreciation of the Mission work, and the manner in which it was carried out. The Rev. Joseph Wood moved the re-election of the officers, which was seconded by Mr. W. J. B. Tranter, and, after a

vote of thanks to Miss Gittins for presiding, proposed by Mrs. C. G. Beale, and seconded by Miss S. S. Dowson, the meeting terminated.

Buxton.—The friends of Hartington-road Unitarian Church will learn with regret of the sudden death of Mr. John Taylor, who for some years has acted as vergier there. His geniality and courtesy, together with a quiet demeanour, made him a favourite with all who came in contact with him. The interment took place at the cemetery on Saturday, the Rev. R. Cowley Smith officiating. A large number of friends were present, and the coffin was loaded with wreaths and flowers. On Sunday morning a memorial service was conducted by Mr. Smith, in Hartington-road Church, at which the respect in which the deceased was held was again shown by the large number of outside friends present. Mr. Smith spoke of the family having become connected with the church some few years ago. After being elected member of the committee, Mr. Taylor for nearly four years had acted as vergier. It was a loss from which they would find it hard to recover.

Derby.—Very successful Sunday-school anniversary services were held on Sunday last, the Rev. J. Birks, F.G.S., pastor, preaching, morning and evening, from Matthew xix. 14 and Matthew xxiii. 23 respectively. Mr. J. C. Warren, of Nottingham, conducted the afternoon children's service, and his visit was greatly appreciated. There was a good attendance at the three services, and the collections were in advance of recent years.

Eastbourne.—The Rev. J. Morgan Whiteman will conclude in May his year's engagement in connection with the cause here. The local journals have expressed kindly sentiments towards him, notwithstanding his outspoken letters in their correspondence columns. The *Gazette* says: During his short stay in Eastbourne, he has made many friends, who value him for his transparent honesty, his straightforwardness, and his kindly disposition. The *Standard* says: There are many who, though having no sympathy with his theological views, will regret his departure.

Halifax: Northgate-end Chapel.—The annual collections for the Yorkshire Unitarian Union, amounting to £3 18s. 9½d., were taken on Sunday.

King's Lynn.—On Wednesday night, between forty and fifty of our past and present members met in the schoolroom to confer on the present state of the affairs of our church here. Mr. I. M. Wade, of Norwich, kindly came over to this conference, and the Rev. R. Spears, of London, presided, as it was through his interest in our church that it was re-opened between three and four years ago, under the ministry of the Rev. U. V. Herford, who is now at Oxford, and who has just resigned this pulpit. It was finally decided, after a long conference, that Mr. Spears be asked to find supplies for the next few weeks, and endeavour, as well, to find a successor to Mr. Herford. We have a handsome church and suitable schoolroom here, in the midst of some twenty thousand people, where an earnest and active Christian minister should not fail to make a strong church.

Leeds: Hunslet.—A sacred concert was given on Sunday afternoon, the 21st inst., by the Mill Hill Chapel choir, to a crowded congregation. The concert consisted of 'The Christian's Prayer' (Spohr), and 'The Song of Miriam' (Schubert), and was conducted by Mr. A. F. Briggs, who accompanied on an American organ, assisted by Mr. H. Sedgwick on the piano, both of which instruments were kindly supplied by Mr. Briggs for the occasion. The principals were Miss Lily Pearce, R.A.M., Miss Wilberforce, Messrs. Rhodes and Haigh. The concert was indeed a rich musical treat, which delighted the large congregation. A collection was taken on behalf of the new organ fund. In the evening there was another large congregation, when the service was conducted by the Rev. A. C. Fox, B.A. At its close a meeting was held, and a committee appointed to take immediate steps for procuring a new organ.

London: Forest Gate.—Miss Ethel Kate Harwood, third daughter of Mr. A. C. Harwood, of Forest Gate, was successful in passing the last Cambridge Local examination in the Senior division.

London: Kentish Town.—On Wednesday evening, March 17, the Band of Hope in connection with the Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, held a prize medal competition for the best juvenile recitation. A silver medal was presented by the United Temperance Council. There were nine competitors. In addition to the medal, two volumes were presented by Mr. G. Seden for the two highest unsuccessful ones. Mr. J. Bellman presided, and Madame Suter, Mrs. Chapin, and Mr. W. Jolley kindly acted as judges. The Rev. A. Farquharson was unable to be present, owing to the serious illness of Mrs. Farquharson. After a spirited

contest the silver medal was awarded to Arthur Baines and the books to Ethel Seden and Christopher Tilley.

London: Newington Green.—Collections were made on Monday last for the Indian Famine Fund, amounting to £12 18s. 5d.

London: Stamford-street.—Last Sunday morning, at the annual meeting of the congregation of Stamford-street Chapel, an identical resolution approving the scheme of amalgamation with the Blackfriars Mission, as reported in another column, was carried.

Margate.—The friends here have presented Miss Ethel Marsh and Mr. Harold Marsh with some very handsome and appropriate gifts in acknowledgment of the help recently rendered by them in the cause of Unitarianism in the town.

Moneyrea (Presentation).—On St. Patrick's Eve a most interesting gathering of members of the various religious denominations in Ulster assembled in Moneyrea Meeting House to join the congregation in presenting an address and purse of sovereigns to their minister, the Rev. Richard Lyttle. The presentation was initiated by the committee of Moneyrea congregation, and was warmly taken up by the congregation. While it was in progress, a desire was expressed by members of other churches to be permitted to join the congregation, and, ultimately, residents in different parts of Ulster, embracing members of the different churches and all political parties, joined in the presentation. At the meeting there were present many persons well known in Ulster, and the audience contained members of the Quaker and the Catholic, the Episcopalian and the Methodist, and the different Presbyterian Churches, as well as Unitarians from different parts of Antrim and Down. The spacious meeting house was quite full. Mr. James Bennett, J.P., as chairman, said that as a congregation they could not have been more united and prosperous than they had been under Mr. Lyttle's ministry. That night they and their visitors met as Mr. Lyttle's friends, and not to advocate any church or party. The address, which was beautifully illuminated by a Belfast artist with pictures of Moneyrea meeting-house and manse, several emblematical figures of Erin, and the Irish Houses of Parliament, spoke with warm appreciation of Mr. Lyttle's work as a minister, and the excellence of his public services. It was signed officially on behalf of the congregation by J. Bennett, J.P., chairman; W. Gibson, P.L.G., hon. sec.; and S. McKenna Turkington, hon. treasurer; and on behalf of the other friends by well-known names in different counties of Ulster, who were representative of the various churches in the province. The address was supported in speeches by Messrs. W. Gibson, A. K. Stewart, and S. McK. Turkington on behalf of the congregation; and on behalf of the other subscribers by Mr. R. B. Caughey, J.P. (Presbyterian), Newtownards, and Mrs. May Holson (Society of Friends), Belfast, as hon. secretaries. The secretary mentioned that, notwithstanding the decline in population and the decay of the farming industry (in which practically the whole congregation are engaged), the financial position of the church had risen to high-water mark during Mr. Lyttle's ministry; and the attendance at public worship had greatly increased, and the membership of the Sunday-school had risen from 72 to 126. Mr. R. B. Caughey, in a brilliant and thoughtful speech, paid a fine compliment to the Moneyrea congregation, as being for nearly a century in the very vanguard of theological and social progress in Ireland. Their present minister had laid the whole farming population of Ireland under a debt of gratitude by his skilful analyses of the Land Laws, and his contributions in speech and article to the discussion of this and other social questions affecting the well-being of the people. The address was presented by Mr. D. Lowry, a trustee of Moneyrea congregation and treasurer of Ravara congregation, which Mr. Lyttle has been mainly instrumental in resuscitating, and the purse containing 140½ sovereigns was presented by Mr. Gawin Orr. Mr. Lyttle replied in a suitable speech, which was published in *extenso* in the *Belfast Irish News* of next day in a report of the proceedings. After cordially thanking his friends, he outlined the elements of a noble Irish citizenship, in which men and women of all creeds and parties could heartily join, and traced the inspiration and culture that flow from great ideals. The Rev. E. I. Frigg (Belfast) next addressed the meeting, and spoke of the principles and honourable record of Moneyrea as a congregation, and of the work of its present minister, testifying that in his experience the members of our English churches respected no Irish minister more than the present minister of Moneyrea. Addresses were also delivered by Mr. McCartan, M.P. (Catholic), Rev. A. Ashworth (Unitarian), Mr. John Gill, J.P. (Presbyterian), Saintfield, Rev. J. A. Kelly (Unitarian), Mr. Joseph Macaulay, J.P. (Catholic), Belfast, Rev. W. J. Davies, Mountpottenger, Mr. J. Woods (Presbyterian), solicitor, Belfast.

Among the visitors present were the Rev. T. Dunkerley Combes, Rev. W. Weatherall (Belfast), Rev. A. E. O'Connor, B.D. (Moira), D. K. Clarke, J.P. (Crosscar), John Carleton, P.L.G. (Greyabbey), Benjamin Hobson, J. McNeill (Belfast), Mr. W. and Mrs. O'Hare, Mrs. Delaney, Mr. Delaney, Miss O'Malley, Mrs. Scott, W. McCalmont, G. J. Bennett, W. Bennett (Belfast), J. Minnis, M. Anderson, A. Reid, J. Carse, J. McCulloch, T. Low, etc. An excellent programme of Irish music was rendered at intervals by Miss Donnelly, Miss Byrne, Miss Burns, Mr. Smith, and the Moneyrea choir, under the leadership of Miss McCalmont. Tea and coffee were provided for the gathering which numbered over 400 people. Over 50 congratulatory letters were received, including many from our Unitarian ministers who were unable to be present. Such a meeting in Ulster was rightly described as a triumph of toleration and Christian charity, and will be long remembered with pleasure by those who were present.

Newark.—The Rev. E. Rattenbury Hodges has printed a sermon on 'The State Church and National Education,' which he delivered February 14. On the title page is a note stating that, owing to Church and Tory influence in the town, the sermon had to be printed in another town.

Southend-on-Sea.—For upwards of a year, the Rev. R. Spears has conducted a service here on the Sunday evening in Essex Hall, Clarence-road. Conference is allowed at the close of every service. The average attendance is about forty adults. Three ladies have offered to play the instrument that leads the singing, which is usually very hearty. Several of the attendants tell Mr. Spears that for years they have never attended any church or chapel till these services were commenced. It is hoped that a permanent Unitarian place of worship will be founded in this town, which numbers 16,000 inhabitants.

Western Union: Visit of Rev. C. Hargrove.—The long-looked-for visit of the Rev. Charles Hargrove to the West is now an event of the past.—*Plymouth:* Mr. Hargrove delivered his lecture on 'Authority and Private Judgment' in the Plymouth Unitarian Chapel on Thursday evening, March 18, before a fairly good audience. The lecturer made an eloquent, inspiring, and convincing defence of Private Judgment, and treated his subject throughout with conspicuous skill and ability. Mr. Hargrove pointed out that in the majority of cases, education and general surroundings help very largely to determine the particular religious beliefs which men hold. It was true, he remarked, that the majority have little time or opportunity to think for themselves on religious matters; but it was quite as true, that to the majority deep, concentrated thinking, on any subject, was a very troublesome and irksome process. Yet no authority, whether of Church, Bible, or individual, could, in any real sense, be accepted as such, until it had made its appeal to the private judgment of the individual. To the true individual, there is no external authority in matters of religion, until, by a process of reasoning the individual has sanctioned it or the reverse. External authority must always be prepared to come up before the individual tribunal for judgment when called upon. The lecturer ably defended and extolled the use of reason and private judgment as good and excellent, in and for itself, as a process, apart from the particular conclusions arrived at and accepted. He also drew the distinction between the liberty and right of private judgment, and pointed out, by one or two examples that orthodoxy was compelled to admit the former, though it denied the latter, and he trembled when he thought of what might occur if any sect of Christendom gained complete ascendancy even in these enlightened times. When the opportunity arose and circumstances were favourable no doubt the history of religious persecution would repeat itself in some measure. The lecturer went on to speak of reason as a God-given faculty, and particularly remarked that men possessed it long before there was any Christ, Church, or Bible, and that the value of reason lay, not in its possession, but in its use, and the more it was used, the more efficient and trustworthy it would become. The lecturer was listened to, throughout, with rapt attention, and some questions were put at the close.—*Tavistock:* The members of the Abbey Church held a public tea in the Town Hall, on Wednesday, March 17, which was well attended. In the evening at the Chapel, the Rev. C. Hargrove, of Leeds, delivered to a fairly good congregation the last of a series of lectures on 'Unitarian Christianity,' his subject being 'The Religion of the New Testament.' The lecturer remarked that believers in the New Testament differed most widely among themselves as to what the New Testament taught, which he attributed, not to any fault of the Book, but to the fault of its readers, because they sought in the Book a body of

doctrine which it was never written to convey. If they went to the New Testament not for doctrine but for religion, they would find it there. Doctrines were many, but religion was one. Did not their common language testify to that! They said of a person 'he is a very religious man,' without knowing to what church he belonged. So in the New Testament was the Gospel, and Gospel meant glad tidings. Any doctrine which was bad news was contrary to the New Testament; it was unchristian. The teaching that our fellow-men were being burnt in everlasting torture was one of these. The good news about God, preached by Jesus, by Paul, and by John, was that 'God is Love,' and that the duty of man was to love—not to believe certain doctrines or perform certain ceremonies. They must love, not in the sense of feeling, but in the sense of doing justly and kindly—love in the sense of doing good works. To do what was right and what was kind included all man's duty, according to the New Testament. The Rev. J. Barron conducted the devotional part of the service.

York.—The Rev. W. Mellor writes, challenging the statement that a 'large majority' passed the Committee's report, etc. We can only say our paragraph was based on a communication from the church secretary. We cannot open our columns to a discussion on the affairs of this church.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Some of our friends have not noticed that we must decline to insert letters unless fully signed. We are at all times obliged by considerations of space to make a selection among the letters sent for publication. Letters, etc., received from B. R.; M. E. D.; J. W.; T. H.; N. C. M.; C. P.; E. C.; W. H. B.; F. T.; S. A. S. (thank you; your suggestion will be remembered); J. B. B. (you have evidently not read our report).

OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28.

Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. HAROLD RYLETT.
Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M., Rev. STOFFORD BROOKE, M.A., LL.D.; and 7 P.M., Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE, M.L.S.B.
Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-rd., West Croydon, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.
Deptford, Church-street, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. A. J. MARCHANT.
Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. F. K. FREESTON.
Forest Gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. D. AROS.
Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FLETCHER WILLIAMS: Evening—'Every Man for Himself.'
Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. BROOKE HERFORD, D.D. Collections for Rosslyn Hill Day School.
Highgate Hill, Unitarian Christian Church, 11 A.M., Rev. R. SPEARS; and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. MARSDEN.
Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. D. DAVIS, of Southampton.
Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, 11 A.M., 'The Use of Religion'; and 7 P.M., 'The Gospel of Art,' Rev. A. FARQUHARSON.
Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. E. STRONGE. Evening, 'Christianity.'
Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High street, 7 P.M., Rev. W. CHYNOWETH POPE, 'Words of Approval.'
Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus, 11.15 A.M., 'Faith and Hope'; and 7 P.M., 'Love,' Rev. P. H. WICKSTEED, M.A.
Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. CADMAN.
Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. G. CARTER.
Richmond, Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FARRINGTON; Evening lecture, 'Francis of Assisi'; 3 P.M., Children's Service.
Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M., 'The Messiah has come'; and 7 P.M., 'Health, Wealth, and Happiness,' Mr. J. EADS HOW.
Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.
Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
Wood Green, Unity Hall, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. Dr. MUMMEY.
Woolwich, Masonic Hall, Anglesey-road, Plumstead, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. JENKINS JONES.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.

BEDFORD, Library (side room), 6.30 P.M., Rev. ROWLAND HILL.

BIRMINGHAM, Church of the Messiah, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. L. P. JACKS, M.A.

BLACKPOOL, Banks-street, North Shore, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. WM. BINNS.

BLACKPOOL, Unitarian Lay Church, Masonic Hall, Waterloo-road, South Shore, 6.30 P.M.

BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West-hill-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. C. COR.

BRIGHTON, Christ Church (Free Christian), New-road, North-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. A. HOOD.

BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. R. COWLEY SMITH.

CANTERBURY, Blackfriars, 11 A.M.

DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. S. BURROWS.

EASTBOURNE, Natural History Museum, Lismore-rd., 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. M. WHITEMAN.

GRAVESEND, Medical Hall, Milton-street, 6.30 P.M., Rev. T. E. M. EDWARDS, 'The Glad Tidings of Christ.'

GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. A. FALLOWS, M.A.

HULL, Park-street Church, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. H. WOODS PERRIS.

LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG.

LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. J. B. LLOYD.

LIVERPOOL, Renshaw-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. DR. KLEIN; Evening Sermon: 'Religion for every day in the week.'

MANCHESTER, Sals, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. JAMES FORREST, M.A.

MANCHESTER, Strangeways, 10.30 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.

MANCHESTER, Upper Brook-street Free Church, 10.45 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. PEACH.

NEWPORT, I.W., Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. J. JUPP.

OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30 A.M., Rev. J. E. CARPENTER, M.A.

PORTSMOUTH, General Baptist Chapel, St. Thomas-street, 6.45 P.M., Mr. THOMAS BOND.

PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.45 P.M., Mr. G. COSENS PRIOR.

RAMSGATE, Assembly Rooms, High-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. T. R. SKEMP.

READING, Unitarian Free Church, London-road, 11.15 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. W. HOLMSHAW.

SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS.

SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. C. H. WELBELOVED.

TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. JEFFERY WORTHINGTON, B.A.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Mechanics' Institute, Dudley-rd., 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M.

WYOMOUTH, Oddfellows' Hall, Market-street, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. E. C. BENNETT.

YORK, St. Saviourgate Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. A. CUNLIFFE FOX.

CAPE TOWN, Free Protestant Unitarian Church. Hout-street, 6.30 P.M., Rev. D. P. FAURE.

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SUNDAY, MARCH 28, at 11.15 A.M., DR. MONCURE D. CONWAY, 'The Wisdom of the World.'

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX-STREET, STRAND, 11.15 A.M., MR. W. R. WASHINGTON SULLIVAN: 'The Twilight of the Gods.'

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BIRTH.

YOUNG—On 17th March, 1897, the wife of Walter Young, LL.B., of Tweed House, Cholmeley Park, Highgate, of a son (Patrick).

DEATHS.

RUNDELL—On the 10th inst., at Dulwich, in his 81st year, William Westcott Rundell, formerly of Devonport and Falmouth, and late of Liverpool.

RYMER—At Richmond Villa, Winton, Bournemouth, Harold Hawling, the dear baby boy of Edith V. and Harold R. Rymer, aged 18 months.

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NEW CHURCH FOR KIRKCALDY.

As already intimated, the Unitarian Congregation at Kirkcaldy have resolved to erect a Hall or Church capable of seating about 200 people, and which can be used for Sunday-school purposes and week-evening meetings. The total sum required is estimated at £1000. The McQuaker Trustees have generously promised £500, on condition that not less than £250 is first raised. Towards this sum the Congregation expects to contribute about £150 by Subscriptions and a

SALE OF WORK.

to be held at Kirkcaldy on September 18 next.

The Members are subscribing to the fund by weekly and monthly instalments, and they are receiving encouragement from a number of sympathisers with the movement in their own immediate neighbourhood, who, though not directly connected with the Church, have kindly promised donations to the Building Fund.

The Congregation earnestly solicit the generous aid of their co-religionists in England and elsewhere.

Donations to the Building Fund will be thankfully received by the undersigned, and acknowledged in this paper.

H. B. MELVILLE, 92, High-street, Kirkcaldy, N.B., Treasurer of the Building Fund; and A. ERNEST PARRY, Kirkcaldy, N.B., Minister.

Articles for the Sale of Work to—

Mrs. PARRY, Kirkcaldy, N.B.
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SALE UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

The Committee of this Chapel respectfully appeal to the Unitarian public for aid in raising a sufficient fund for the re-construction of their place of worship, which was destroyed by fire on 20th December, 1896.

Chiefly on account of deaths and removals from the district, the congregation has, for some years, been in difficulty, owing to a serious decrease of financial support. Two years ago, however, a successful effort was made to clear off the debt that had thus accumulated. Without outside help, over £250 were subscribed for this purpose; and within the last twelve months the chapel was beautified, and a sum of over £80 raised by means of a sale of work.

Since the settlement of the Rev. JAMES FORREST, M.A., in May last, both the membership and the attendance at the Sunday Services have considerably increased, and the whole prospect become much more hopeful. Our congregational progress, however, has been checked by the burning of our chapel, as our work cannot be efficiently carried on until it is re-constructed. Although the attendance has not appreciably suffered since our enforced meeting in the Old Chapel, the congregation has to endure much inconvenience and discomfort, and all efforts to maintain or improve our position are seriously hampered.

The work of re-building is now being proceeded with; but the cost, including a slight but much needed alteration, will be at least £600 greater than the amount received for insurance. The congregation, notwithstanding the heavy calls lately made upon it, has agreed to raise £250 of this sum, and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association has most generously promised a grant of £50.

In our specially unfortunate circumstances we confidently appeal to our friends throughout the country to help us to the amount required.

Subscriptions may be sent to, and will be gratefully received by,

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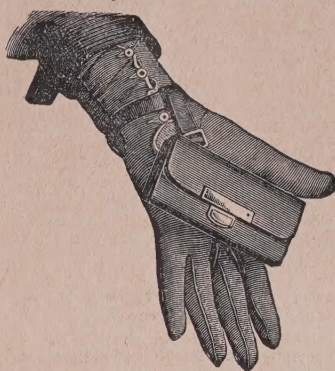
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WHITHERWARD?—See Article by Rev. STOFFORD A. BROOKE, M.A., in *Seed Sower* for April. London, Essex Hall, Birmingham ARNOLD WOOD, 31, Paradise-street.

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OLD MEETING, SIDMOUTH.

The Committee of this Chapel make an earnest APPEAL to the Unitarian public for assistance. The ceiling of the Chapel is in an unsafe condition, and has to be entirely replaced, and sundry other repairs are also necessary. The congregation is at the same time desirous of building a Schoolroom. There are 60 children in the Sunday-school, a very large number if the population of the town, about 3000, is taken into consideration. With greater accommodation this number would certainly increase, but at present the work is carried on under great difficulties, as the children have to be taught in the chapel and the small vestry.

FURTHER APPEAL.

It was estimated that £300 would do what is necessary, but since their first appeal the committee find that it might be possible to buy a small piece of land, and thus build a more commodious room. For this an additional £100 at the least would be required. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association has made the liberal promise of £25, when the work is well in hand; and if the generous assistance of their co-religionists be continued, the committee hope to obtain the whole sum required.

Donations will be gratefully received by the Treasurer, Miss BARMBY, Hill Foot, Sidmouth; and by Mrs. H. M. DARE, Cottymead, Sidmouth; and acknowledged in this paper.

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TUESDAY.

Reception of Guests and Foreign Delegates.
Communion Service, conducted by the Rev. Brooke Herford, D.D., of London.

Religious Service conducted by Rev. C. H. Well-beloved. Sermon by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., LL.D.

WEDNESDAY.

Morning—Conference. Chairman, Harry Rawson Esq., J.P.

Readers of Papers, Rev. Joseph Wood and Rev. W. E. Addis, M.A. Subject, 'The Deepening of the Spiritual Life of our Churches.'

Afternoon—Conference. Chairman, Herbert Bramley, Esq.

Readers of Papers, (1) J. Cogan Conway, Esq., on 'Ministerial Superannuation'; (2) Rev. J. E. Manning, M.A., of Sheffield, on 'The Means of Recruiting our Ministry.'
Conversazione in the Mappin Art Gallery.

THURSDAY.

Morning—Conference. Chairman, Rev. Brooke Herford, D.D.

'What our Churches are actually doing in Mission Work,' with suggestions. Short reports by ministers and others.

Afternoon—Conference. Chairman, Jesse Hind, Esq.

Resolution on the Education Question, to be moved by Grosvenor Talbot, Esq., seconded by the Rev. C. J. Street, M.A., LL.B.

Evening—Public Meeting in Albert Hall. Chairman, James R. Beard, Esq., Manchester.

Subject, 'Signs of Hope and Progress in the Religious Outlook of our time.'

Speakers—Rev. Brooke Herford, D.D., London; Rev. Wm. Binns, Blackpool; Rev. G. St. Clair, Cardiff; Rev. S. Fletcher Williams, London; and W. Blake Odgers, Esq., LL.D., Q.C.

FRIDAY.

Morning—Conference. Chairman, Grosvenor Talbot, Esq.

Paper by the Rev. Professor J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., on 'The Place of Immortality in Religious Belief,' on which there will be no discussion.

[Unitarian Workers' Union Conference—Mrs. Manning, of Sheffield, in the chair. Women's Work, Religious and Social. (a) Agencies already existing; (b) How to make them effective.]

Afternoon—Conference. Chairman, James R. Beard, Esq.

Paper on 'International Arbitration,' by Hodgson Pratt, Esq., Chairman of the International Arbitration and Peace Association, etc.

Resolutions appointing Officers and new Committee for the next Conference, etc.

LONDON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

THE FIFTH MUSICAL FESTIVAL will be held at ESSEX HALL, on SATURDAY, APRIL 10th.

A Choral Competition between contingents from the Sunday-schools connected with the above Society to commence at 3.30 o'clock. Adjudicator, E. MINSHALL, Esq. A Concert by the United Choirs to commence at 6 o'clock. Conductor, W. SEEMER BETTS, Esq.; Miss PRITCHARD in the chair. Tickets of admission (Adults, reserved seats, 2s.; unreserved seats, 1s.; children, 6d.), can be had at all the London Churches, or on application to Mr. HARE, at Essex Hall, and will include tea, only if purchased before April 5th.

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WIDOWS' FUND (Founded 1733).

A GENERAL MEETING of the Subscribers will be held at the Offices of the Sunday School Union, No. 56, Old Bailey, Ludgate Hill, E.C., on MONDAY, the 5th of APRIL, 1897.

The chair will be taken at Two o'clock precisely.

R. GRACE, Secretary.

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The Bazaar will be opened on Wednesday, at 3.30, by ROBERT D. HOLT, Esq., first Lord Mayor of Liverpool. T. A. JOHNSON, Esq., of Northwich, will preside. On Thursday by GEORGE HY. LEIGH, Esq., of Swinton, Manchester.

Contributions in goods or money will be gratefully received by the Minister, J. MORLEY MILLS, Woodland-terrace; and the Treasurer, Mr. JOHN S. HARDING, 67, Pillory-street (and Fallowfield, Manchester); or the Secretary, Mrs. T. H. HILL, 1, The Barony, Nantwich.

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